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THE STORY OF A SKULL. By W. H. Hudson.

COUNTRY LIFE

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E. O. HOPPE

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THE NEW YEAR.

THIS issue appears on the first day of 1916. Our readers have time and again witnessed the exit of the old year and the beginning of the new, but never in the memory of the oldest has there been a time of such historical importance as that in which we are living. Very few people realise the fact except in a conventional way. To the majority life to-day is very like what it was three or four years ago. But then the majority judges by those actions which are necessary and obligatory. Whatever happens, a man to live must eat and sleep and perform other natural functions daily, and this has been going on in spite of the fact that we have been living through a very great revolution. What that revolution may mean in terms of history it is as yet too soon to prophesy. We know, however, that at the end nothing will be as it was at the beginning. The map of

Europe is being re-drawn for one thing, and nations are counter-changing their relative importance. It would indeed be idle to speculate on the various dispositions that will remain after so complete a shuffling of the cards, but some changes have already occurred and others must follow in their train.

Probably, when the whole history of the munition trouble we have had is laid bare, we shall understand better what extraordinary revolutions have been made in some of our methods. Mr. Lloyd George's cry of "Too late" is indicative of certain weaknesses which had developed unseen during the long days of peace. It is very evident to-day that arsenals and factories were originally under the direction of those not very well fitted for the work. Many were soldiers, and soldiers of the type that existed before the war were not trained to preside over gigantic manufacturing processes. But then the military man himself has undergone a metamorphosis before our very eyes. As we knew him, his training was for the purpose of fighting. He cultivated such subsidiary arts as that of being always smart and punctual, but his character was pre-eminently military. When, however, Lord Kitchener set about the preparation of a new Army, he succeeded in attracting to it many of the most gifted young men in various walks of life. It is impossible to say now that an officer does not understand business, because many of these men were at the head of very large concerns, and to-day we have scarcely done justice to the magnanimous courage with which they laid aside a prosperous career and staked all on the hope of serving the country. The best of them took into the Army the skill and experience learned in the successful pursuit of a civil calling. It will be of great importance and great interest to watch those young men—who so far have been only serving an apprenticeship to war—when they rise, as they inevitably must, to high command. Times like these in the Army as elsewhere are most favourable to the rise of talent. In the soft and pleasant days of peace it is so easy to push forward a nephew or other relative if he were only moderately suitable for a position. These favourites of Fortune have been found out in many walks of life and we believe that the fact of this having occurred will tend to the enhanced efficiency of the whole nation.

The question at the moment is not whether a wholesome and good change is being effected, but whether we shall be able to complete it in time to bring the whole available power of the Empire to bear on the enemy. What, of course, is in our favour is that the Germans, although the more efficient in some respects, are in others deplorably wanting, and in their extraordinary egotism they are blind to the fact. Sometimes English people are blamed for being too outspoken about the national weaknesses. There are many men in the acquaintance of each and all of us who would consider it most discreditable to be considered guilty of any kind of bragging or over-confidence and they consistently under-estimate both themselves and their nation. This is a fault, but it is a fault in the right direction, because the habit may and often does lead to the detection of a weakness that might otherwise pass unnoticed. The German super-confidence blinds him to corresponding weak portions in his own mental outfit. Of course, it is extremely difficult to understand what is going on in a country where freedom of speech is so sadly curtailed that what appears in the papers cannot be accepted as at all representative of national sentiment. We can only piece together a few hints gathered here and there, but these go to show that, whatever the result of the war, the Huns are likely to be left in the position of the members of the Stewart Dynasty, who forgot nothing and learned nothing. As we have said, it is an unsafe thing in these times to attempt to prophesy, but the New Year opens with what we consider to be well founded hope.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Duchess of Westminster, who has been nursing in her own hospital at Le Touquet since the beginning of the war.

.. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



• NOTES •

KING GEORGE'S Christmas message to the Forces was sympathetic and hopeful. The sentence in it on which public attention focussed was "I rejoice to know that the goal to which you are striving draws nearer into sight." After making full allowance for the King's desire and duty to hearten and encourage his subjects, this cannot be dismissed as a piece of mere Asquithian optimism. It is supported by incontrovertible facts. The preponderance of men is now in favour of the Allies. Colonel Repington, no oversanguine advocate, says: "We Allies, counting only men actually at the front, have about six million of men to the five million of our enemies." In munitions also the superiority is on our side. Germany began with a store accumulated during years of preparation. This is exhausted, and she is now compelled to manufacture, just as we are. The cost to us was at first the greater because factories had to be erected and the edifice built from its foundation. But if we have now gained a position of equality, this must quickly change to superiority, because in this matter our command of the sea places the enemy at a severe disadvantage.

ECONOMICALLY, ours is by far the better position. Before the war German Imperial finance was unsound. To complete her preparations Germany three years ago made a raid on capital to the extent of £50,000,000, and the ordinary income did not meet the expenditure. If these facts be borne in mind, it becomes plain that Dr. Helfferich's recent statement to the Reichstag was coloured to catch the public eye. As Mr. Edwin Montague, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, has pointed out, the depreciation of the mark was 12 per cent. on October 1st, at Christmas it was 19 to 20 per cent. below par in New York, and 26 per cent. in Amsterdam. Mr. Montague gives the only possible explanation when he traces this to "the manufacture and abuse of paper credit." German prosperity before the war was founded upon a foreign trade which has been brought to a standstill. But for the occupation of so many people in the manufacture of munitions and equipment—a spending that spells dead loss—her population would be in dire distress. These are some of the facts which, in the words of His Majesty, are bringing the Allies within sight of goal.

BUT every good player at chess, the intellectual mimicry of war, is aware of the difficulty of converting a winning position into an actual win, especially when the adversary is stubborn, self-confident and full of guile. Unless the utmost vigilance and energy are brought to bear, he may at the last moment either turn the tables by some unexpected coup or escape defeat by a stalemate. Mr. Lloyd George's speech on Christmas Day is an eloquent warning against counting chickens before they are hatched. There are many points worthy of notice in an address instinct with imagination and sympathy. Nothing could exceed the force of his description of the war as an earthquake "upheaving the very rocks of European life," a seismic disturbance in which "nations leap forward or fall backward in a single bound." But a minority at least of those he was speaking to will not recog-

nise that "you cannot haggle with an earthquake." With a tale of half a million casualties before them they are still squabbling about the little rules of their society and thereby imperilling victory and abetting the slaughter of those who were their mates.

AMONG the numerous military changes that are being made, presumably in preparation for an early offensive, none is more interesting than the removal of the Indian troops from France to another field of action. They have acquitted themselves like men, though fighting under the disadvantage that trench warfare was new to them, and, newer still, the deadly modern devices of which the Germans make ruthless use. Only on occasions did they have a chance of developing the brilliant dash in which they excel. But they absolutely deserved the fine tribute paid by the King and read by the Prince of Wales at a parade held before their departure from France. In it the note is sounded that the British and Indian troops have been comrades in arms equally engaged in defending the Empire which is the heritage of both. Their valour and loyalty have discomfited the Germans, who calculated on the sowing of sedition in India, by bringing closer together than ever the Mother Country and her great dependency. They do indeed "leave France with a just pride in honourable deeds," and we all share His Majesty's confidence that their proved valour and experience will lead to further victories.

LA BELLE FRANCE has responded nobly to the call for subscribers to the "Loan of Victory." M. Ribot, the Minister of Finance, was enabled to announce to the Senate on Christmas Eve that the loan has produced, in round numbers, £580,000,000, of which £220,000,000 is new money. The result is amazing if the circumstances be considered. France has been fighting under difficulties that paralyse industry. The enemy, almost from the beginning, has been within her borders and has been in possession of her richest manufacturing provinces. But the war has transformed every Frenchman into a hero and patriot. It is remarkable that 2,000,000 subscribers came from the provinces as against 1,000,000 in Paris. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate the fact that all classes are confident of the result and are prepared to make sacrifices in order to attain it.

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Once by the fire untended
Of love, I faced the years;
For fuel failed, and every day
Took something of that glow away:
I thought, "When love is ended,
What day shall end my tears?"

Now as by each dead ember
This one night-watch I set,
As year is gathered unto year,
I know a new, a mocking fear—
Not that I shall remember,
But lest I may forget!

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

KAISER WILLIAM never perpetrated a piece of more bare-faced hypocrisy than is embodied in his proclamation "To my noble and heroic Serbian people." He beseeches them to "come back to their homes, their customs and their labours," swearing himself to be their friend, although only a few weeks ago war correspondents of German papers were relating how the wretched Serbians were turned out of hearth and home to face the wintry weather without shelter so that room might be made for German soldiers. Crowds of people were described by the *Vossische Zeitung* as lying outside freezing and foodless, while in their houses German officers and men "sat comfortably around cheerful fires awaiting a smoking meal." This is bad enough without taking into account the unspeakable atrocities to which the papers of neutral countries bear witness. And in the beginning it was Germany which forced this war upon Serbia. It was this Kaiser, now posing as a kind friend, who turned a deaf ear to the pleading of the Czar. When even Austria relented and was willing to enter a conference it was the Wilhelmstrasse that insisted on war. Now that the butcher is caressing the lamb, Serbia well may ask "Can this be washed in Lethe and forgotten?"

LORD EVERSLEY discloses a curious situation in regard to Stonehenge. It is universally agreed that this great and ancient monument would most appropriately

become the property of the nation. There are few to whom the idea of free access being barred and a price charged for admission is not repugnant. Until very recent years this privilege was freely accorded the public. On the death of the late owner Stonehenge was purchased by Mr. Chubb of Salisbury who publicly disclaimed any idea of having bought for investment. Yet he does not seem inclined to sell under conditions that might have been expected to appeal to his public spirit. Two offers have been submitted to him by Lord Eversley. One was from a peer who offered full reimbursement for his outlay. This was rejected. Subsequently Lord Eversley was able to offer him a profit of 10 per cent. on his outlay. This also was refused—a vexatious result. Lord Eversley goes so far as to suggest compulsory acquisition at a fair valuation by the State. We do not like the idea of employing force to make a man part with property which he has legally and legitimately acquired, and would recommend a further attempt at peaceful persuasion. An owner who deliberately thwarts the public interest is not serving even the class to which he belongs.

LADY ONSLOW, who in the absence of Lord Onslow is managing his property in Surrey, has prepared an admirable scheme for adding to the food supply of the cottage tenants. If they are prepared to keep pigs or poultry or both she offers on behalf of Lord Onslow to help with the initial expense. She would supply materials either for building the requisite houses or adapting old ones to that purpose. A loan is also offered to the full value of poultry or pigs purchased, to be repaid by easy instalments with interest at 4½ per cent. Other inducements are held out. This is one of the most practical methods of simultaneously advancing the interests of the poor and benefiting the country. How the country cottager may evade the hardships of the leanest year and the dearest prices is by growing his own food—vegetables in the garden, pigs and chickens in their houses and runs. But when he does so the money is not paid for imports, and so he is helping towards national thrift as well as benefiting himself.

SURELY the headmasters were taking a narrower view than we expect from them when they decided that it was a waste of brains to allow young men of great mathematical ability to join the Army. What they meant was that in the great work of recuperation after the war the country will have great need of mechanical genius. That is true in a way, but the country would never agree to the drawing of an invidious distinction between men of talent and men fit only for cannon fodder. Every recruit is asked to risk all for his country, and it would surely be a strange proceeding to ask of one man to give all because he has not much to give and excuse another because he has more. Rather is it for the man of intellect or of wealth to show an example as Rupert Brooke did. In war-time, and indeed at all times, character counts for more than ability, whether it be in the ranks or in the Cabinet. Besides, who is to say? Great inventors are not invariably from the public school and university; no small proportion have been self-educated. Only a prophet could make the selection which the headmasters advise.

THE great decrease in pauperism about which the daily papers have had so much to say opens up a most interesting problem. It is doubtful if the solution offered so freely in many quarters is the right one. Generally speaking the war has caused a great transference of money from the pockets of the capitalist to those of the worker. It has passed through such avenues as the increased demand for labour, much higher wages, liberal allowances and the distribution of various funds. That is, the heavy taxpayer and the benovolent have been paying out to the poor. If the latter could be induced to save their surplus earnings, either by investment in War Loan or other means, the situation at the end of the war would not be unfavourable. The workers would be able to get over the inevitable lean years by the help of what they had laid by. Capital will be in great demand to make good the shortage due to restricted manufacture in war time and things would very quickly right themselves. But the main point is to induce the wage earners to save when they can. The statesman far-sighted enough to secure that end will deserve all of the country.

OF the late Mr. Clarence Rook, whose death occurred just a day before Christmas, a little word, as Malory would say, must be said. He was not one of the "bards sublime," or indeed a heavyweight of any kind; his mirthful heart

would have scorned the name; but he invented "The Office Window" for the *Daily Chronicle*, and his was the eye that gazed through it in the early days. Not an achievement to affect the destiny of nations! but yet, who knows, but that he who out of wide knowledge and a keen sense of humour excites interest or provokes a smile is as valuable to the human race as that Balbus who built a wall, as most of us learnt in boyhood from the recondite pages of Caesar's Commentaries. And long before the window opened, Mr. Clarence Rook had proved himself a good journalist. What is perhaps of more consequence is that his gay and gallant heart was a help and encouragement to all who knew him. Lightly he trod the earth, may the earth lie lightly on him!

SO the Poet Laureate is to be welcomed into the ranks of the anthologist. Surely if he tries he ought to beat all the others, for there is no man of letters who has read and studied more widely than Robert Bridges. It is understood that the book is to be a collection of passages in prose and poetry from French and English literature, and it is to be called the "Spirit of Man." We wish good luck to the enterprise. Mr. Bridges will not be the first Laureate to try his hand at an anthology. It was Alfred Tennyson's fastidious and perfect taste that made the first Golden Treasury indeed a treasure without price, and the effect of his withdrawal was but too deplorably felt in the falling away of the second. The only cause of apprehension in the case of Mr. Bridges is that his very love of scholarship and technical accomplishment may prove his undoing. Reading in war-time should make an appeal as direct as an anguished cry on the battlefield, and should recall the open air and not the study. And the "Spirit of Man" takes in a great deal, laughter as well as high purpose, the apparently trifling as well as the serious.

THE TWO WORLDS.

God made the world—but not this world of ours!—
His orb is perfect, deathless, sinless, one . . .
Upon the astonish'd mirk of chaos it shone
Ablaze with bright archangels, thrones, and powers.

And, being so fresh from the All-Creator's mind,
There tarried in it still a living flame
That made the darkness wonder whence it came
And flooded with new dawn the formless wind.

Those rays that slipt athwart the abysmal space,
In pale reflection of a perfect sphere,
Framed, as they fell, this earth of now and here:
Our orb of joy and ruin, of gloom and grace;

Our globe of chequered life, where love must die;
Our world, half mad, and half immortal still:
A star's reflection in a muddy rill
Fall'n from the intangible, remember'd sky.

MARY DUCLAUX.

CONSIDERABLE attention is being paid just now to the assertion of a war correspondent that the Russians do not understand the part Great Britain is playing in the war. It is urged that the matter has not been fully explained to them in the newspapers. But that is beside the mark. Russians are not yet a newspaper reading race in the sense in which Englishmen and Frenchmen are, and depend for their information and opinion to a large extent on oral tradition. Of course, this does not apply to the intellectuals. No statesmen or politicians are ignorant of the part England has played. But the proletariat expected some more spectacular performance. They all know something of the manner in which our seamen of old, Drake and Frobisher, Nelson and Collingwood, achieved what to other nations seemed impossible, and they expected some great deed such as the routing of the German warships out of Kiel Canal or the storming of Wilhelmshavn. What they do not understand is the silent strangle-hold of the Fleet, the strangle-hold which has brought enemy commerce to a standstill and seriously interfered with their food supplies. Here is a defect not easily remedied by the means at disposal. Russian papers quote very little from their foreign contemporaries. Perhaps the better plan would be to induce some of the cleverest journalists in Moscow and Petrograd to come over here and visit the Fleet as their French contemporaries have done. But the efficacy of this is doubtful, and it may be the better—as it is certainly the more dignified policy—to await issue of the war and let the Russians judge by events.

COASTWISE CRAFT.

SHE had been on the stocks for over a year and was due to be launched, so I took a day's leave and went down the river to see her set afloat. She was nothing to me. As a commercial venture, I had no material interest in her, but on my voyages out and home she had been a familiar mark on the river; she grew under my eyes from the keel up. In late autumn she was laid down; I saw the shipwrights clear the ways and set her blocks. Then—a trip or two—and her timbers stood clear above the shipyard wall. In winter, when the reach was shrouded in fog and mist, she made a fine mark for a mid-channel course. Spring, she seemed to progress little; but that would be the workmen taken off for a hurry-up job at Harleys' new tug. In summer, though, she was a-din with the hardwood music of the caulker's mallets; the far end of the yard was littered with long pine shavings as the spar makers trimmed and faired her masts and booms. She was a good honest job, but took a long time a-building. I think her prospective owner must have had a difficulty with his payments.

At the yard gates they seemed surprised that a stranger should wish to see a little topsail schooner take the water, but they let me in and even seemed pleased at my interest. It was a grey day in November, with little wind, and the mist hanging low in the reach. The north bank looked dim and distant to me, but the shipwrights told me it was none too far away for their modest check, and they were waiting for the first of the ebb to swing her clear.

She was to be called the Alice A. Alice A. herself was already waiting with her family party for the moment when she would swing a bottle of wine adorned with ribbons against her namesake's shapely bow and set her free to glide afloat. Alice would be perhaps fourteen or fifteen, a clear-eyed, clean-limbed schoolgirl, with her hair in ribbons. She

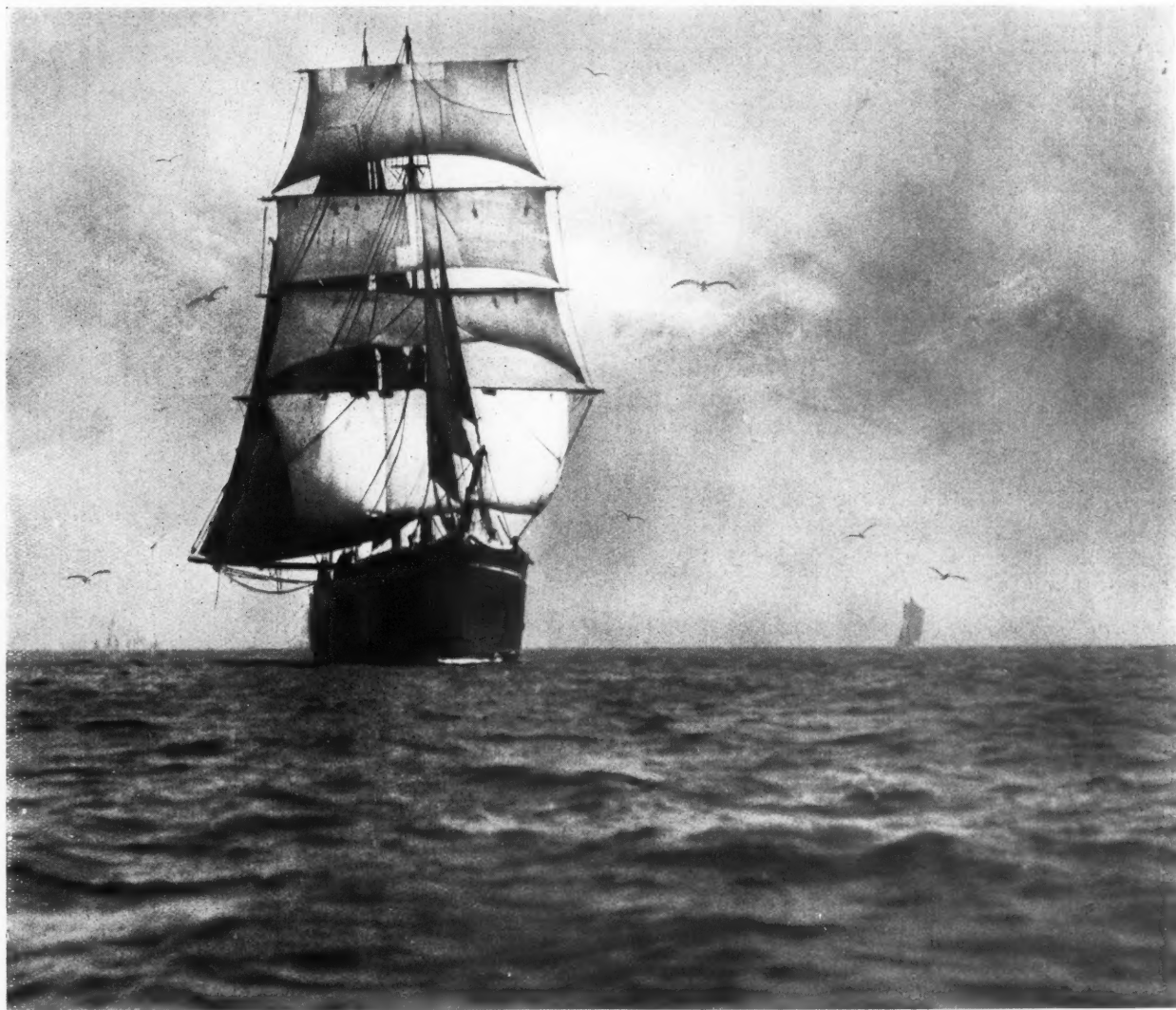
looked very happy and excited at the day's event; hers was no *blasé* social function, there were no reporters there to record her attire—no dull speeches and fancy compliments and bowing and scraping—her only reporter here relates that she was a neat and pretty Miss and worthy to name a battleship. Her father, the owner of the schooner, stood at her side. He looked anxious. I could imagine that the Alice A. was an important venture for him. Likely enough, she held all the savings of his working life. His wife was there and a younger child—a small boy who perhaps some day would sail the schooner. Around, in a modest unphotographic group, stood a few relatives and neighbours, and the shipwrights and their foremen.

The launch was a success. I am sure, to this day, pretty Alice never dreams that other hands than hers set the vessel moving. (Thoughtful master carpenter, who screened the men at the jack with a drop of sacking!)

It is quite a time now since I stood by the riverside and watched the Alice A. glide down the ways and set afloat; details are dim in my mind, but always I will remember the slim figure of the little schooner's godmother, as she stood on a baulk of timber, all a-tiptoe with excitement and happiness, wildly cheering her namesake to the water.

That was the proper way of a ship christening. Could the Alice A. go back on a send-off like that? Could she be aught but a trim and happy ship with such a memory to take to sea with her? The last I saw of her she was bowing gracefully to her mistress, her figure-head—a dainty maid, hand carved as ever was—dipping low as she went full afloat. Now, all the coasting schooners are Alice A.'s to me—happy ships, busy ships, homelike, familiar!

Some days ago I cleared from the Mersey. Inside the Bar Ship the wind was moderate enough, but the south cone was hoist at every dockhead flagstaff, telling of gales and



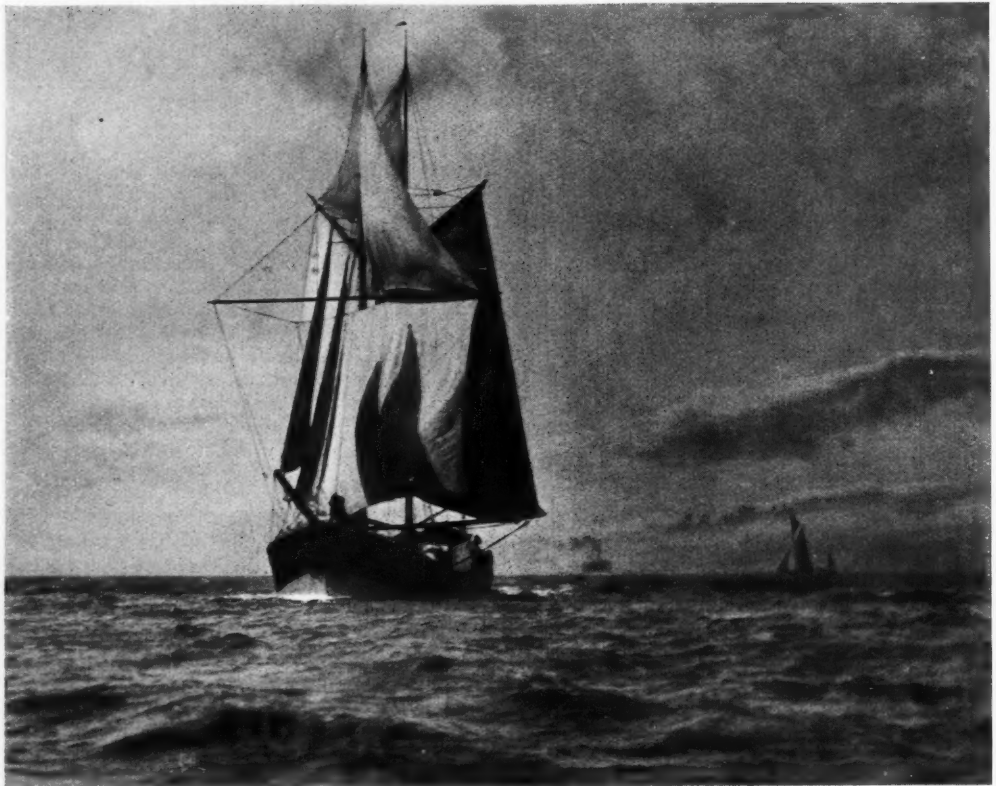
A. Leader and F. Little.

IN GALLANT TRIM.

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foul weather in the bay. We met them in the channels, coming in from sea—a fleet of Alice A.'s—every one with her reefs shaken out and dingy creases showing on the storm-beaten canvas to prove the heavy weather they had just come through.

Back and across the Queens and Crosby they stood, taking all the wind could give them, with a strong flood tide to help them up to windward. No steam tugs for them while they had the wind and a tide! Towing is an expensive luxury, so they borrowed on the shoal side of the channel buoys, carried long, head to wind, as they went about; cut a corner here and luffed a point there; all busy and a-trim to make their anchorage in the Sloyne before the good flood tide forsook them. Sturdy, independent, little sea-wings! What mattered to them that that big Atlantic



A. Leader.

IN THE THAMES.

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liner coming down drew twenty-eight or thirty feet while their modest draught was but ten or twelve? They stood



A. Leader and F. Little.

A FRESH BREEZE.

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fast on their rights as sailing vessels within the meaning of the Act; the Loyal Forrester of Barrow nipped across our bows, just where we slowed to take the bend, and the Janet and Margaret of Ardrossan chose the fairway side of a wreck-mark barge to go in stays!

Once I put in to Moelfre Bay, a-lee of Point Lynus, to land the Mersey pilot. A sou'west gale was just on the turn, breaking up to finer weather, and the bay was crowded with coasters and small craft sheltering under the headlands. Most were topsail schooners, the favoured rig of the West and South Coasts, though here a long North Wales barquentine rode out the swell, and there a Manx ketch nestled close under the land. As we stood-by, waiting for the Liverpool pilot steamer to take our man, the wind fell moderate and rustled out to the westward. At the first sign the coasters were on the alert, heaving short on their anchors and casting loose their headsails. Then one bold spirit weighed, hoisted storm stays'l and a rag of main canvas, and crept cautiously round the headland. At first she lurched unsteadily in gusty winds and the recurve of the open swell; then, opening the land, the yet strong blast of the moderating gale laid her over in a fine cant and showed her glistening copper in the wash of sea and swell. At that, she stood out close-hauled, while her bold skipper studied the wind and weather and reckoned his course to clear the Ethel Rock. Out behind him came the others—the Jane Wesley of Portmadoc, bound south with salt from Runcorn; the Try Again of Bideford; the John and Ellen of Aberystwyth, working home in light trim, after piling slates on Newton Quays—all the busy little craft that serve the coasts, glad to be under weigh again and setting their sail power and seamanship against the wind that blew. Here one would shake out a reef, there another set his square tops'l for a run up north, till Lloyds' man at Lynus would shut his glass with a snap and enter up his log, "Coasters and small craft have now put to sea."

For all their comfortable homelike air, the times press hard on the coaster fleet. Competition by gaunt bare steamers—"grabbers" they call them—swinging in and out of port in haste, loading and discharging by steam power, has forced the strictest of economy on the sailing fleet, where never at any time was there waste. Gear and tackle are scant and stinted, canvas is patched and re-patched till scarce a thread or rope yarn of the original sail remain. This is all hard

work for the coaster, but fine for seamanship. Nothing that can be repaired on board is sent ashore, and thus the coasting seaman is usually an able sailorman, cunning at splice and rope work, handy with palm and needle and the marlin-spike. To hand and reef and steer is his daily job; *suji-muji* and holystoning and chipping iron rust, red-leading and coal trimming—so much the order of things on the "grabbers"—troubles him little or not at all. It is no great matter to him that paint work has turned yellow and dingy, that last summer's coating of oil on his soft-wood decks has decomposed and turned a copper brown; he knows that the



A. Leader and F. Little.

A WIDE-WINGED BARQUE.

Copyright.

foot-ropes on his tops'l yard will stand his weight aloft, and that that long splice he turned into his main sheet the other day will keep the pull of any winter's gale that may be met between the Mull of Galloway and Land's End.

Still and all, he is not without pride in the appearance of his craft. Come the spring, when all proper sailormen's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of paint and varnish, he will be busy in such odd moments as may be in trimming and touching up his ship. The topmast spars will be scraped and oiled (varnish costs good money), the rigging be tarred down

the blocks made to stand out in a fine shiny coat of "mast colour." In intervals of sailor work, the bulwarks will get their annual coat of paint, the hull and topsides be blacked down (with the thin blue streak painted in, for mournings for the owner's grandson may not yet be discarded). Then, when all the main work be done and the little schooner looks—to longshore eyes—a finished job, there remains the great and unassailable institution of "touching up." Gilding the lily is but a poor comparison to the efforts of the coaster to decorate his craft. Jack and 'Arry and the boy will set about, each with a pot of vivid red or blue or emerald green, and the solid deck fittings, the scuttle-butts, the binnacle, the tiller-head, the galley buckets, the hand-spike racks, will all show forth in prismatic grandeur. I have even seen them at work on the figurehead, desecrating the trim effigy of an Alice A. by painting in her eyes, her hair, her cheeks (Ye gods, a vivid blush!), and turning her spotless robe to royal blue! At this, indeed, I have felt angry and have had it in my mind to complain, but I knew it to be a labour of love to 'Arry and Jack, for they were at it in what, in more regular ships, would be their watch below. Sea-gipsies they are, akin to the market showman with his merry-go-rounds, or the canal bargee with his painted posies on the inboard ends of scuttle-butts!

When summer comes with fine and moderate weather and long sailing days, life in the coasters is at its best. There is no longer need to turn all hands out (with the skipper to take the helm) when anything has to be done. The watch on deck—the mate, two hands and the boy—can manage finely. Mate: "'Ere, Bill. You out an' furl that jib. Boy can coil down th' gear, an' I'll go aft an' look at th' time, an' we'll awl be doin' somethin'!" Gone are the hard weather and the long dark nights; gone, the sores at wrist and elbow from the constant chafe of sodden oilskins; gone the creases in the reef-bands, the heavy suit of storm canvas—the gaff-tops'l is bent at the main again and all's well!

Out and about at the first of the dawn, slipping along in fine winds from headland to headland, standing up to a moderate summer's gale for training, drifting a-tide in calms and lazy airs, and turning in to homeward ports at dusk; all a-pleasuring as finely as any wealthy sportsman who has a yacht to please him and a gold-laced skipper to touch his cap.

D. W. B.

THE STORY OF A SKULL.

A QUARTER of a century ago there were still to be seen in the outer suburbs of London many good old roomy houses, standing in their own ample and occasionally park-like grounds, which have now ceased to exist. They were old manor houses, mostly of the Georgian period, some earlier, and some, too, were fine large farmhouses which a century or more ago had been turned into private residences of city merchants and other persons of means. Any middle-aged Londoner can recall a house or perhaps several houses of this description, and in one of those that were best known to me I met with the skull the story of which I wish to tell.

It was a very old-looking, long, low red-brick building, with a verandah in front, and being well in the grounds, sheltered by old oak, elm, ash and beech trees, could hardly be seen from the road. The lawns and gardens were large, and behind them were two good-sized grass fields. Within the domain one had the feeling that he was far away in the country in one of its haunts of ancient peace, and yet all round it, outside of its old hedges and rows of elms, the ground had been built over, mostly with good-sized brick houses standing in their own gardens. It was a favourite suburb with well-to-do persons in the city, rents were high, and the builders had long been coveting and trying to get possession of all this land which was "doing no good" in a district where haunts of ancient peace were distinctly out of place and not wanted. But the owner (aged ninety-eight) refused to sell.

Not only the builders, but his own sons and sons' sons had represented to him that the rent he was getting for this property was nothing but an old song compared to what it would bring in if he would let it on a long building lease. There was room there for thirty or forty good houses with big gardens. And his answer invariably was, "It shan't be touched! I

was born in that house, and though I'm too old ever to go and see it again it must not be pulled down—not a brick of it, and not a tree cut, while I'm alive. When I'm gone you can do what you like, because then I shan't know what you are doing."

My friends and relations, who were in the occupation of the house and loved it, hoped that he would go on living many, many years; but alas! the visit of the feared dark angel was to them and not to the old owner, who was perhaps "too old to die": the dear lady of the house and its head was taken away and the family broken up, and from that day to this I have never ventured to revisit that sweet spot nor sought to know what they have done to it.

At that time it used to be my week-end home, and on one of my early visits I noticed the skull of an animal nailed to the wall about a yard above the stable door. It was too high to be properly seen without getting a ladder, and when the gardener told me that it was a bulldog's skull I thought no more about it.

One day, several months later, I took a long look at it and got the idea that it was not a bulldog's skull—that it was more like the skull of a human being of a very low type. I then asked my hostess to let me have it, and she said, "Yes, certainly, take it if you want it." Then she added: "But what in the world do you want that horrid old skull for?" I said I wanted to find out what it was, and then she told me that it was a bulldog's skull—the gardener had told her. I replied that I did not think so, that it looked to me more like the skull of a cave-man who had inhabited those parts half a million years ago, perhaps. This speech troubled her very much, for she was a religious woman, and it pained her to hear unorthodox statements about the age of man on the earth. She said that I could not have the skull, that it was dreadful to her to hear me say it might be a human skull; that she would order the gardener to take it down and bury it somewhere in the grounds at a distance from the house. Until that was done she would not go near the stables—it would be like a nightmare to see that dreadful head on the wall. Then, I said, I would remove it immediately: it was mine, as she had given it to me, and it was not a man's skull at all—I was only joking, so that she need not have any qualms about it.

That pacified her, and I took down the old skull, which looked more dreadful than ever when I climbed up to it, for though the dome of it was bleached white, the huge eye cavities and mouth were black and filled with old black mould and dead moss. Doubtless it had been very many years in that place, as the long nails used in fastening it there were eaten up with rust.

When I got back to London the box with the skull in it was put away in my book-room and rested there forgotten for two or three years. Then, one day I was talking on natural history subjects to my publisher, and he told me that his son, just returned from Oxford, had developed a keen interest in osteology and was making a collection of mammalian skulls from the whale and elephant and hippopotamus to the harvest-mouse and lesser shrew. This reminded me of the long-forgotten skull, and I told him I had something to send him for his collection, but before sending it I would find out what it was. Accordingly, I sent the skull to Mr. Frank E. Beddard, the prosector of the Zoological Society, asking him to tell me what it was. His reply was that it was the skull of an adult gorilla—a fine large specimen.

It was then sent on to the young collector of old bones, and it saddened me a little to part with it, certainly not because it was a pretty object to possess, but only because that bleached dome beneath which brains were once housed, and those huge black cavities which were once the windows of a strange soul, and that mouth that once had a fleshy tongue that yowled and clicked in an unknown language could not tell me its own life and death history from the time of its birth in the African forest to its final translation to a wall over a stable door in an old house near London.

There are now several writers on animals who are not exactly naturalists nor yet mere fictionists, but who, to a considerable knowledge of animal psychology and an extraordinary sympathy with all wildness, unite an imaginative insight which reveals to them much of the inner, the mind life of brutes. No doubt the greatest of these is Charles Roberts the Canadian, and I only wish it had been he who had discovered the old gorilla skull above the stable door, and that the incident had fired the creative brain which gave us the "Red Fox" and many another wonderful biography.

W. H. HUDSON.

THE HOME LIFE OF THE GREAT CRESTED GREBE.—II.

BY CHARLES R. BROWN.

[We now publish some further extracts from Mr. Charles R. Brown's observations of the Great Crested Grebe, with notes by his friend.—Ed.]

JUNE 19TH, 1915.

THE observation was taken up on this day by my friend, O. J. W., who was in the hide from 10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

His notes confirm his observations of the 17th with regard to the turning of the eggs, change of position on the nest, and the sharing of the domestic duties of incubation and nest repairing.

He states definitely that the male dries its wings, standing erect upon the nest, fully extending the wings, with a quivering motion, after the manner of the shag. Unfortunately, he failed to secure a photographic record of this incident.

C. R. B. took up the watch from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. There was no further incident of note, but my observations confirm my notes of the 18th, that the eggs are turned every forty to fifty minutes, and that the birds take up a fresh position on the nest after each turning.

JUNE 21ST, 1915.

It was with high expectations that I set out to continue my observations of the great crested grebe, for I was hoping to secure some records of the two birds at the nest in various positions, other than those of them, when brooding, obtained upon my previous visits.

Now that the hide had been in position some eight to nine days I trusted that the birds would be more confiding and that I should find them more at their ease. Upon arrival at the keeper's house I found that he had already left to rescue some partridge eggs that had just been mown over in one of the meadows. As there was no one available to row me out to the hide, or rather to remove the boat when I landed, and as the keeper was not expected to return for some time, I decided to try my luck with a nightjar which had recently hatched out on the adjoining hillside.

I am happy to say that I secured some very good and pleasing results of the adult bird alighting to the young, during the two hours' interlude, but the young were most

active—although only three and four days old, they were continually moving their quarters.

12.55 p.m.—I arrive at the hide, and after removing one or two objectionable slanting reeds at the rear and at the side of the nest, I lost no time in fixing up the camera; but before this was completed, and the boat barely clear of the reeds, the female—or is it the male?—approaches from the rear. I have said that the colouring of the male is far brighter than in the case of the female, yet here I am, after two days of observation, hesitating as to the sex; several times on subsequent occasions I found the same difficulty in deciding right away which of the two it was.

1.5 p.m.—My first impression proved to be correct, for it was the female, which took up a position with her back to me. I was glad to see this, for I took it as a sign of confidence. She appeared to quite ignore the hide and not even glance in my direction, until hearing the release of the shutter, when she twisted her head round and looked over her shoulder, trying to discern the cause of the sudden noise. It now became a question of waiting for something to happen, but nothing unusual occurred until

1.52 p.m., when she got up and without turning round—that is with her back to me—turned and rearranged the eggs, and again brooded with her back to me, only facing slightly to the left. She now settled contentedly on the eggs, and all being still she eventually went to sleep, her head drooping forward with the beak resting on her breast. Unfortunately the light was now failing, and it began to look very like rain. She continued to sleep, only just raising her head for a second should I make a sudden movement or noise in the hide, and dropping off again, almost immediately, remaining thus till

2.38 p.m., then getting up she inspected the eggs and appeared about to turn them, when, her mate coming through the reeds from the right, she slipped into the water; the male jumped on to the nest at once before she had reached the reeds, and standing astride the eggs, arranged them to his satisfaction, then settled down to brood, facing the camera and sitting well forward on the nest. The female meanwhile swam round behind the nest through the reeds, passing to and fro several times before finally retiring. Unfortunately the light had now become very poor, and the result of my attempts to record this changing incident must have been very unsatisfactory, as it



A CONTENTED PAIR.

was now commencing to rain and had become dull and overcast. The male remained very still without incident till

3.25 p.m., when he changed his position, this time facing to the left—that is, to my left. Shortly after this the keeper arrived with the boat to take me ashore. Whether it was owing to the grebe having just changed his position or not I do not know, but the bird left the nest upon this occasion without any attempt to cover. It was not that the boat approached any differently than upon previous occasions, but this was the only time that either bird had left the nest without covering, except at the changing periods, when they never covered.

JUNE 22ND, 1915.

O. J. W. took up the watch on this date. His observations are as follow:

"Notes practically as those of the 17th. The birds seem to sit for about three hours each, turning the eggs every forty to forty-five minutes, changing positions as before. At change of occupancy of the nest, the birds repair the structure vigorously. The nest must sink and become very bulky in time, below the water surface."

With regard to the above observation as to the nest sinking and becoming very bulky, I will add that another nest found on the 20th of July, 1915, containing four eggs, measured 26in. by 20in. across the centre, and was raised about 3in. above the level of the water, with a cup-like depression some 9in. across



"TURNING": SIDE VIEW WITH ALL THREE EGGS SHOWING.

ing-up of the mass. The eggs were estimated to be at the eighth day of incubation when these measurements were taken.

JUNE 26TH, 1915.

C. R. B. in the hide.

Upon examination, one egg was found to float about a quarter of an inch out of the water, the other two stood end up, but sank just below the surface.

My observations from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. on this day confirm my notes of the previous dates, with nothing new to record.

JUNE 28TH, 1915.

C. R. B. again takes the watch.

All three eggs now float slightly out of the water, but each one higher than the other. From this I conclude they will not all hatch on the same day; yet I do not think any considerable time elapses between the laying of each egg, as some writers assert. What does occur, I think, is that the bird commences to sit as soon as the first egg is laid, and that the eggs are laid on successive days.



10.42 A.M.—"SHE CONTINUED TO ADD TO THE NEST WHILE HE WAS 'UNCOVERING.'"

This is the seventeenth day from the finding of the nest, and if my assumption at that time was correct, namely, that the eggs were from seven to eight days incubated, then they should hatch from the 30th June to the 1st or 2nd of July, when incubation would have extended from twenty-six to twenty-eight days.

10 a.m.—All fixed up in the hide, boat departs, and I am ready for what may happen.

10.2 a.m.—While yet anticipating, I am surprised to see the female approach, as the boat is not yet clear of the reeds. She at once dives and comes up at the other side of the nest, and after inspecting the hide again dives to the rear. On emerging she remains stationary some few seconds, when she again dives, coming up close to the left side of the nest. Springing on to the nest, she immediately uncovers with her back to me, and turning round broods facing the camera.

10.33 a.m.—Appearing very uneasy and unsettled she rose and partly covered the eggs, then slipping into the water dived at once and appeared among the reeds to the rear of the nest; after remaining stationary for a short interval she again dived and came up at the left

10.40 a.m.—of the nest, just as her mate emerged from the reeds at the right. Diving once more, she brought a large piece of decayed reed from below the surface, which she added to the structure, as the male

10.42 a.m.—ascended the nest. She continued to dive and add to the nest, while he was "uncovering," after which he adjusted the nest material and inspected the result

10.44 a.m.—of his labours, then glided into the water without any attempt to brood.

They both swam quietly away to the right among the reeds, where, diving, they brought more decayed material to the nest, both arriving together, one at either side. They now appear very excited and quickly dive and seem to be working against time in their endeavours to repair the nest.

10.57 a.m.—The male now returned on to the nest and sat facing the hide, but the female continued to add to the structure, the male pulling up the new material closer around him, or replacing a piece here and there.



10.44 A.M.—BOTH ARRIVED TOGETHER, ONE AT EITHER SIDE



AND SEEMED TO BE WORKING AGAINST TIME.



10.57 A.M.—"THE MALE NOW RETURNED TO THE NEST AND SAT FACING THE HIDE, BUT THE FEMALE CONTINUED TO ADD TO THE STRUCTURE."



BOTH WITHDRAW HURRIEDLY.

This nest repairing continued for some thirty-five to forty minutes altogether. On several occasions the female reappeared close to the hide, between it and the nest. After a final inspection by the female, and after the male had stood up and adjusted the eggs and again settled down facing the camera, the female withdrew to the rear, remaining there a

11.17 a.m.—few seconds, then diving and finally disappeared from view.

11.32 a.m.—Male turns the eggs, broods facing to the right.

12.17 p.m.—Change of position from right to left.

12.52 p.m.—Again turns the eggs and broods tail on to camera.

1.37 p.m.—Female returns to the nest, and after turning the eggs broods facing to the right. All being quiet and close, but dull, she soon drops off to sleep.

2.15 p.m.—Having awakened, she turns the eggs and changes her position from right to left.

2.57 p.m.—Rearranges the eggs, and facing the hide, again goes to sleep.

3.35 p.m.—The boat can be heard returning. She prepares to leave, and after covering glides into the water as the boat enters the reeds and remains at the rear of the nest until the boat actually touches the hide, when she finally disappears from view.

JUNE 29TH, 1915.

O. J. W. in the hide.

Notes confirm those of the 17th and 22nd. The bird repairs the nest while sitting; raises its crest if it suspects the approach of other species, such as waterhens, wild duck or gulls, etc.

Changing as usual, also turning of the eggs. Observations from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

JULY 1ST, 1915.

O. J. W. took the first watch on this day; his notes are as follow:

10 a.m.—On arriving at the hide I heard fairly loud chirping from the nest. An examination of the eggs shows no sign of chipping. The eggs evidently approaching hatching, so took up position in hide at once, but neither bird came to the nest until midday.

12.0 noon.—When the two birds came together and swam round and repaired the nest.

12.30 p.m.—The female comes to the nest and remains sitting till

1.30 p.m.—Turning the eggs twice in the meantime. I heard the young chirping all the time I was in the hide. I also noticed that the bird sat further forward on the



10.57 A.M.—"A FINAL INSPECTION BY THE FEMALE."

nest to-day than on previous occasions, and appeared very attentive to its eggs as if chipping them herself. I could not definitely say whether she actually chipped them, but she may have been attempting to do so.

2 p.m.—C. R. B. takes the watch onwards.

Upon arrival at the hide, in view of what O. J. W. told me of the actions of the old bird, I examined the eggs, but found no sign of chipping. All three float higher out of the water than on the 28th, when I last tried them, so conclude all three contain live young. One can be heard chirping loudly in the shell, though there is no sound from the other two.

2.5 p.m.—The male comes to the nest.

2.20 p.m.—Male now gets on to the nest and broods facing the camera.

3 p.m.—He now takes up a position three-quarters back to the camera, but facing slightly to the left, in which position he goes to sleep.

3.45 p.m.—Change of position, now facing to the left. He seems very weary, in fact actually yawns. This he did three times, one of which I just managed to record. He partly erected his crest upon hearing another male crow, and appeared very anxious for the female to relieve him.

3.55 p.m.—The male gets off the nest without covering and swims round the nest and among the reeds, as if looking for her, but never goes out of sight.

4.15 p.m.—He returns to the nest, with a very resigned "Well, I have to" sort of look.

4.30 p.m.—The boat arrives, and the male gets up, covers the eggs and departs. The young chirp and sound as if hatched. On inspection I find that one egg is chipped half round. The light being now very bad, and my friend about

to leave for his train, I decided to go ashore in order to let him know the state of the eggs, and to make arrangements for staying the night, as I expect the other two may hatch by to-morrow evening, so leave the hide at 4.50 p.m.

6 p.m.—I return to the hide, and as I have no one to row me, I have to leave the boat in the reeds at the side of the hide. Upon examination of the nest, I was astonished to find that one young one had hatched out and disappeared, leaving the empty shell behind in the nest, along with the other two eggs. Although I could not find any trace of the young, its plaintive cry was clearly audible in the reeds.

6.5 p.m.—The male now returns to the back of the nest. He seems very suspicious, no doubt owing to the presence of the boat, and the fact that no one had left.

6.15 p.m.—He ascends the nest, and after uncovering, turns over the empty shell, then settles facing three quarters front. It is noticeable that he keeps lifting his wings, and seems to hold them quite loose.

6.50 p.m.—He now changes his position to full front. There is no sign of the female or young one, although the latter can be heard chirping at the time.

7.20 p.m.—Change of position from front to facing to the right. He is very uneasy.

7.30 p.m.—There is now a very heavy mist rising from the water, and as no incident of note has happened, I pull in the boat, whereupon the male leaves without covering. On examination I find the eggs show no signs of chipping, and as no chirping can be heard in the shells, I conclude they will not hatch before the morning. I therefore pack up and depart, hoping to be able to complete my records and observations on the morrow.

(To be continued.)

THE ROYAL WELSH FUSILIERS.

BY SIR GEORGE ARTHUR, BART., M.V.O.

Author of "The Story of the Household Cavalry."

The Story of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, by H. Avray Tipping, M.A., F.S.A. (COUNTRY LIFE Library, 7s. 6d. net.)

THE regiment which on the march is customarily preceded by a splendid processional goat and, in defiance of officialdom, spells its national name in its own way (with a "c")—which still, after the lapse of two centuries and a quarter, toasts the pious memory of "Toby Purcell's Spurs and St. David," and to this day retains a semblance of the ribboned "queue" of its periwig—is not likely to cherish its greater traditions less warmly than it does these minor ones. Nor does any other regiment in the King's Service possess more numerous or more moving memories of its past exploits than the Old Twenty-Third, whose splendid list of battle honours must be one of the longest in the Army. In one respect the "R.W.F." enjoys a distinction almost, even if not quite, unique: it is not a combination of diverse regimental fragments inheriting totally different traditions. The original "R.W.F." is the "R.W.F." still, with a single, unbroken and unmixed pedigree.

Wales during the Civil War had been a fruitful recruiting ground for the Royalists, and the fourth Lord Herbert of Chirbury had little difficulty in raising the Welsh Fusiliers for William III at the critical moment when eighteen new regiments had to be embodied. The Twenty-Third, after the fashion of the time, bore successively the names of its earliest colonels, being

known as "Herbert's," "Purcell's" and "Ingoldsby's." It came into being and endured its first campaign in an unhappy atmosphere of robbery and jobbery. The Regiment's first big scrap was at the Boyne, but it really won its spurs at Aghrim in 1691, where it played a conspicuous part in the assaults on the Irish position, and, in fact, then, once for all, established a reputation never since lowered. Under William of Orange it followed his varying fortunes in Flanders, beginning soon after the siege of Namur in 1695 to be known as The Royal Welsh Fusiliers. It had a glorious career under Marlborough, taking all its share of the credit evermore to be associated with the names of Blenheim, Oudenarde, Ramillies and Malplaquet. The story is admirably told by Mr. Avray Tipping, the full accounts of the first two of these fights being particularly animated and stirring.

But the Twenty-Third were to reach a still higher pinnacle of fame. Their sturdy gallantry under Huske, in bearing the brunt of the great French cavalry charge at Dettingen, finds a worthy parallel in the indomitable pluck with which, at Fontenoy, they marched in the second line, leisurely and without wavering, up the fire-swept slope and right into the heart of the enemy's position. At Minden, as if to outdo even that performance, these heroic men advanced, with only two other regiments in the first line, and with no support except from the six battalions in the second line, straight upon the 10,000 horse opposed to them. While bearing the



PRIVATE, ROYAL WELSH FUSILIERS, 1742.

cross fire of sixty-six of the enemy's guns, they remained unbroken by his cavalry charges—six times repeated, and as often met with a death-dealing volley at close quarters. Minden alone suffices to crown the Royal Welsh Fusiliers with supreme and imperishable renown, though the regiment is even now gathering for itself fresh and fadeless laurels on the fields of Flanders.

The intervening period of about half a century between these achievements and the raising of a new Second Battalion for service in the Spanish Peninsula is punctuated by a series of little known but often arduous exploits in North America and at sea, in the West Indies and Holland, in Egypt and Denmark. The Second Battalion acted in Spain under Sir John Moore; the First Battalion went to Portugal to join Wellington. From 1808 to 1814 the regiment was at work in the Peninsula, and the names of Albuera, Badajos, Salamanca, Vittoria, the Pyrenees and Toulouse mark the stages in its progress. Mr. Tipping places the great events of these six years in a clear light, and his description of the Waterloo campaign is admirably done. The direct share of the Twenty-Third in the great battle began when the Duke himself had to lead up fresh troops to strengthen his right centre. Among these were the "R.W.F.," who, before the battle ended, sustained several charges of the French Cuirassiers. Though their loss was comparatively small, it included their colonel, Sir Henry Ellis, whose portrait, taken from a miniature, is a welcome feature of the book.



BILLY, THE GOAT.

Reduced during the long European peace to a single battalion, the regiment saw service across the Atlantic; but in 1842 a new Second Battalion was raised, which joined its sister unit at Montreal. This "reserve" battalion was amalgamated with the First Battalion in 1854, when the Royal Welsh went to the Crimea with a total strength of 913. Its arduous fighting in the Battle of the Alma, where it sustained 211 casualties, and at the unsuccessful but heroic attempt to take the Redan, where the regiment was hotly engaged and suffered a loss of 180 men, is realistically recalled in these pages.

The Crimean War was only just over when the regiment, under orders for China, was diverted to India, where the Mutiny of 1857 had broken out. The Twenty-Third, which formed part of the Lucknow Relief Force, at this time consisted, as a result of its recent losses in the Crimea, mainly of young soldiers. How worthily these boys upheld the traditions of the Royal Welsh is evident from the part they took in the celebrated Relief of the Lucknow Residency. Three Victoria Crosses were earned on this occasion in the regiment, whose fine Indian record includes its share in the capture of Cawnpore and Lucknow.

A notable event in the history of the "R.W.F." was the raising in 1858 of another new Second Battalion, 1,218 strong, which, having met the senior Battalion in England

in 1870, was sent in 1873 to fight in Ashanti. In 1880 at Woolwich the two held a combined commemoration of St. David's Day, as they did once more at Malta in 1914. The First Battalion served in the Burma campaign of 1885, and in 1889 celebrated its bicentenary at Lucknow. The Second Battalion took part in the operations against Tientsin and Peking in 1900, the First Battalion having meanwhile been despatched in 1899 to South Africa, where the high value of its fighting qualities was amply testified by the despatches of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener.

This striking record of the splendid services rendered by a regiment during two centuries and a quarter to King and country is already being supplemented by the fresh annals it is compiling for itself in the Great War. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, which in 1858 consisted of a single battalion, had by Christmas, 1914, swelled to twenty-three. In 1908 there was united to it, as a Third Battalion or Special Reserve, the ancient and honourable regiment of the Royal Denbigh Militia, which, even in the eighteenth century, shared the right of the Royal Welsh to possess a Regimental Goat. At the same time the Volunteer corps of North Wales were incorporated as the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Territorial Battalions of the "R.W.F." Since the war began thirteen Service Battalions and a Garrison Battalion have appeared in the "Army List."

The Denbighshire Territorials were among those who in 1914 went to the front.

The regiment's First, Second and Third Battalions from the outset formed part of the Army despatched to Flanders. The First Battalion, included in the 7th Division, were reported as having in October, 1914, "attacked the enemy with much gallantry and dash, and later acted with coolness and discipline under trying conditions." During two other days' fighting they "bravely held out against very heavy enfilade artillery fire and an enveloping infantry flank attack, until they were withdrawn—the battalion losing three-quarters of its strength in officers and men." A few days later it held on with the same tenacity against another enveloping attack, this time losing nearly all its effectives, inclusive of the Colonel and all its other officers. Only ninety men rejoined the brigade; in fact, as a battalion the glorious First had, for the time, ceased to exist.

The Second Battalion also fought and bled during those first weeks of the war, when the numbers of the British Expeditionary Force sent to Flanders were so terribly inadequate to its grave task. During many subsequent months of ruthless fighting

the Royal Welsh have incurred further heavy losses. But the huge numbers of them that remain are animated by the same spirit as the gallant comrades whose splendid example points the way through present sacrifice to future victory. In years to come there is no regiment whose unselfish devotion to duty will be remembered more gratefully by their country than the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

NOWELL.

"I am wae," said the Princess, "my heart is sad,
Tell me, Shepherd, what makes you glad."
"I watched my flock when the moon rode high,
And I saw a ship in the silvern sky,
A little ship sail slowly by;
And they that journeyed therein were three:
A man, and a Maid most fair to see,
With a small sweet Babe upon her knee;
And my sorrows fled," the Shepherd said,
"When the Son of God smiled down at me!"

ANGELA GORDON.

IN THE GARDEN.

WINTER WASHING FRUIT TREES.

THE fruit growers in Kent, and doubtless those in other counties, are now busy spraying their trees with caustic alkali wash. Those who cultivate fruit for profit know the importance and great value resulting from this winter wash; and yet in many private gardens, where fruit trees should receive even better attention, evidence of sad neglect in this respect is only too often apparent. The commercial fruit grower looks upon American blight with the same feelings that the vegetable grower has for wireworm. They are pests to be kept down with a firm hand, and in the process of eradicating them no stone should be left unturned. American blight, or woolly aphid, is very much on the increase in many parts of the country. Private gardeners are often heard to say that it does little or no harm to the fruit, but those who send the highest quality fruit to market know better. Experience has taught them that American blight is the forerunner of canker, and that fruits without blemish cannot be grown on infested trees.

Canker is the most injurious of all diseases of the Apple. It attacks large branches, and it will often kill a tree outright by encircling its main stem. The only way to deal with this disease is to cut away the affected part, paring it down with a sharp knife well into the living tissue, and dressing the freshly cut branches with Stockholm tar or white paint. But the point to bear in mind is that canker can only enter a tree at a wound; hence the importance of dressing cut surfaces with an antiseptic. The wound may be caused at the time of pruning or by an injury to the stem with spade or fork at the time of planting and in other ways; but one of the commonest means by which canker gains access to trees is by way of punctures in the bark made by the small woolly aphid.

When once the canker is established, the woolly aphid increases at an alarming rate in the gnarled and diseased bark of the tree. This insect and this fungus pest live together, to their mutual advantage—a kind of symbiosis, in fact, in which they carry out their work of destruction. American blight is best dealt with now. It is worse than useless to leave the matter until next July and then write to the Editor for remedial measures. There is no cure for large standard trees that have been neglected for years and are badly infested, although their condition may be improved by lime-washing the main stem and large branches; but young trees and those trained as bush pyramids or wall trees should be sprayed now, whether American blight is present or not. The caustic alkali wash is made by dissolving 2lb. of caustic soda (98 per cent.) in a gallon of warm, soft water, then adding to it 1lb. of soft soap. After the whole is thoroughly mixed, make up to 10 gallons, preferably with soft water.

This spray is of a burning nature. Old clothes and rubber gloves should be worn while using the wash, and experience soon

teaches one to keep to the windward of the spray. It is well to use a knapsack sprayer and the finest nozzle possible for the solution. The wash has the effect of removing moss and lichen from the bark of the tree, also loose bark with which it may come in contact.

The result is that the harbours of the American blight are removed, while Apple suckers and the cocoons of the codlin moth usually secreted in the crevices of the bark are left exposed to birds which prey upon them. In cases where woolly aphides are ensconced in large numbers, an old sash brush should be used, rubbing the solution well into the crevices of the bark. One thing is most important, *viz.*, that the wash must only be used when the buds are dormant. Some weeks before the buds actually burst open they show signs of awaking life. At such a time spraying with caustic alkali wash would have a most disastrous effect. For this reason successful and industrious fruit growers are now taking advantage of the winter season by spraying their trees with this cleansing winter wash. H. C.

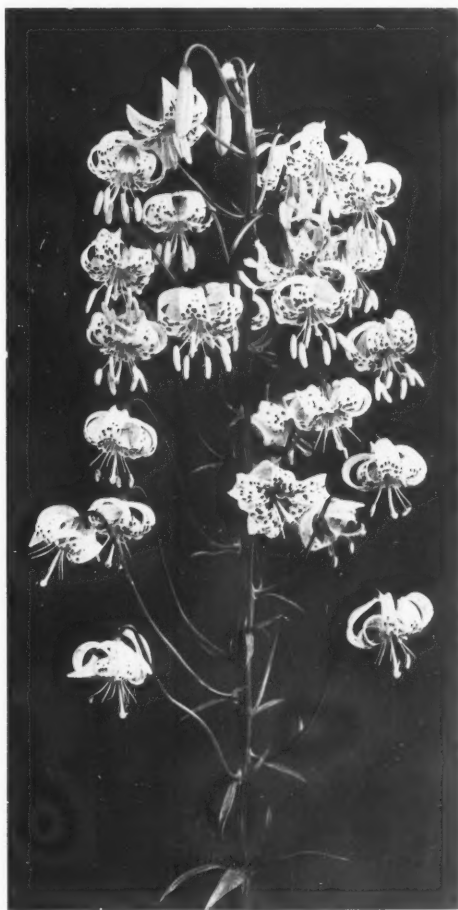
A DIFFICULT LILY AND AN EASY ONE.

THE Lily which goes by the trade name of *Lilium Krameri*, but which is recognised by botanists under that of *L. japonicum*, has proved hitherto a source

of unmitigated disappointment to British cultivators. Not from any lack of beauty, for it is one of the loveliest of the genus, being the only rose-coloured Lily except the almost equally difficult *L. rubellum*. Since the first bulbs of *Kramer's Lily* arrived in this country about forty years ago, many thousands have been imported annually. A moderate proportion of these may have come through the first winter and developed the flowers which they had prepared on the sandy slopes of their native Nippon;

but probably not 1 per cent. survived to a second season. Hence it is about the rarest Lily to find flourishing in an English garden. Imported bulbs invariably arrive in this country too late for committal to the open ground, for they should be planted as early as possible in autumn. But it is worth any amount of pains to overcome the difficulties which have hitherto baffled us. The likeliest way to success is by raising it from seed, which it is said not to be difficult to obtain from imported bulbs if these are kept in pots, the flowers fertilised by hand, and plenty of sun allowed to ripen the seed.

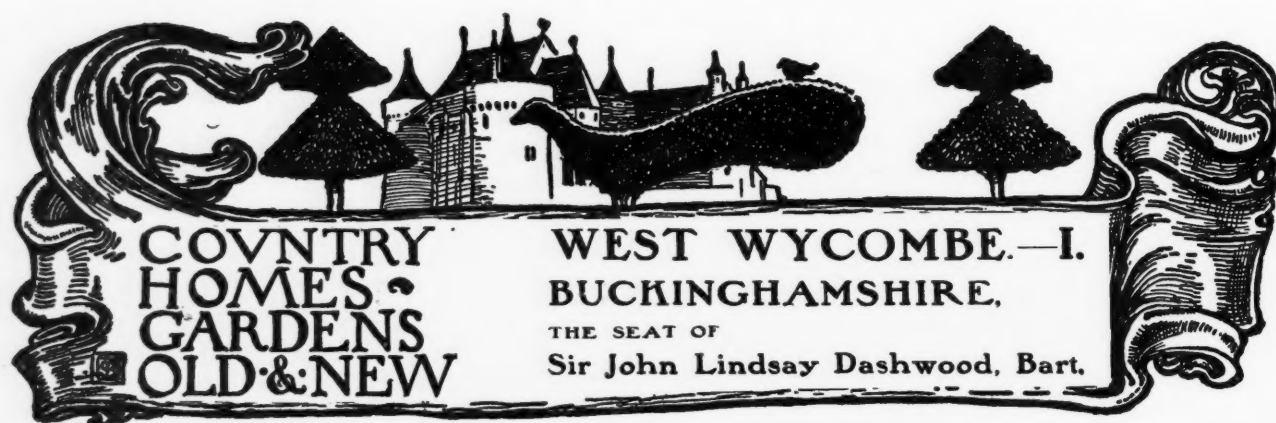
The North American *L. Roezlii*, on the other hand, is an easy and generous subject, being merely one of the innumerable varieties of the Panther Lily (*L. pardalinum*). The flowers, which, as shown in the illustration, are most liberally produced, are of a beautiful light orange colour, with claret spots. All the Panther Lilies grow from rhizomes instead of bulbs; but *Roezli's Lily* does not spread in the free manner of the others, and must be propagated from seeds or scales. Like its congeners, it is a lover of a moist, indeed a boggy, soil, relishing peat sand and leaf-mould, and abhorring lime. HERBERT MAXWELL.



R. A. Malby. *LILIUM ROEZLI.* Copyright.



Reginald A. Malby. *LILIUM KRAMERI.* Copyright.



WEST WYCOMBE was an old possession of the See of Winchester until its surrender to Edward VI in 1550 by whom it was given to Protector Somerset. Reverting to the Crown it was given by Elizabeth to Sir Richard Dormer, whose family appear to have been tenants of the Bishops of Winchester.

Charles Dormer, second Earl of Carnarvon, sold it to Thomas Lewis, alderman of London, who, in 1698, granted it to his brothers-in-law Sir Samuel and Sir Francis Dashwood. The latter, who became the owner of the property, was born in 1658, and created first baronet in 1707. He was member for Winchester from 1708 to 1712, and he was twice married, the second time, in 1705, to Mary, daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmorland, and eventually co-heiress of the barony of Le Despencer. She died 1710, but her son Francis, born 1708, who became the second baronet on the death of his uncle John, seventh Earl of Westmorland, succeeded in 1762 to the Barony of Despencer by her right. In May of that year he was Chancellor of the

Exchequer up to April of the next, after which he was one of the Postmaster Generals for several years. He married in 1745 Sarah, daughter and heiress of Thomas Gould of Ivor, Bucks, widow of Sir Richard Ellys. Her death took place in January, 1769, and his, without issue, in December, 1781, when the barony fell in abeyance, and the baronetcy went to his half-brother, Sir John Dashwood King, M.P.

Baron Le Despencer figures largely in Georgian memoirs from his association with Wilkes, the Earl of Sandwich, and others, members of the Medmenham Abbey Club. As the owner of that property and the president of the club his responsibility could not have been a light one. It was the time when Gay's Opera was still in the public mind, and the Earl of Sandwich gained the nick-name of Jemmy Twitcher which never left him, even when its origin had been forgotten.

Horace Walpole has various allusions to Sir Francis Dashwood with whom he seems desirous of remaining on terms despite the fact of the latter's forming part of the powerful group which brought about Sir Robert's fall. He

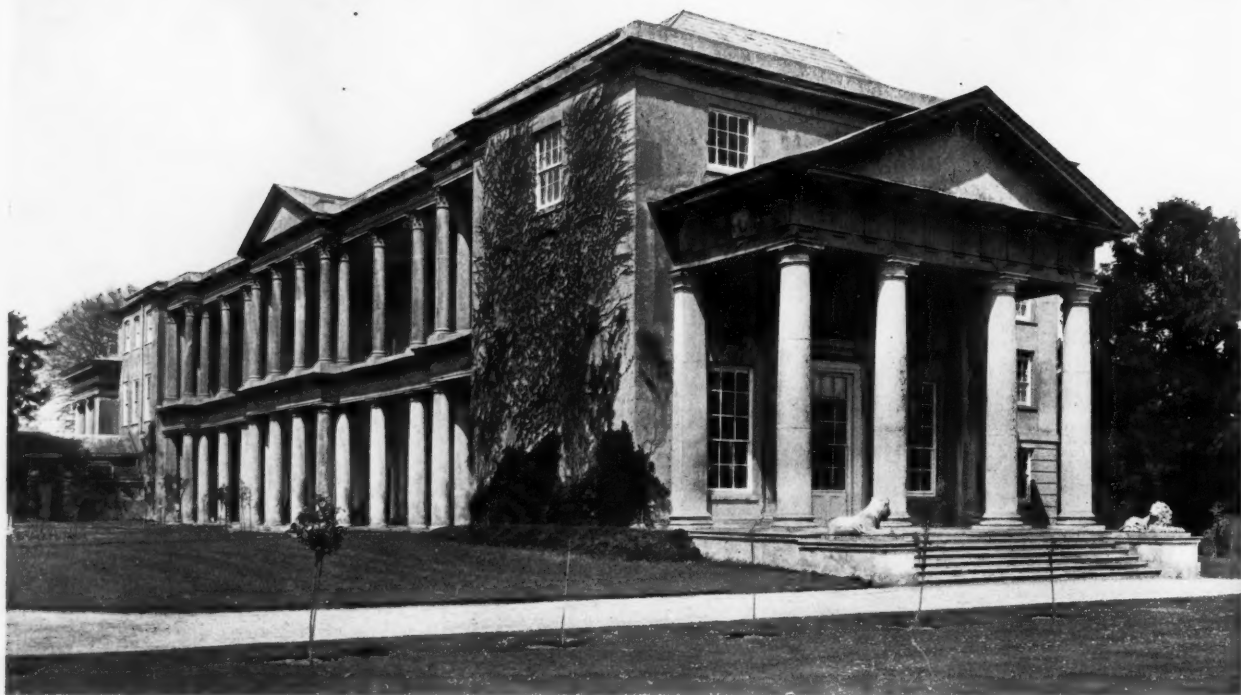




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UNDER THE WEST PORTICO.

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FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

writes to Mann at Florence in 1741 that Dashwood has asked him to have six Etruscan urns from Volterra, of a chimneypiece size, sent with his own things from Italy. In connection with the Dilettanti Society we hear that Sir Francis Dashwood and Lord Middlesex were in Italy together, and after their return they seem to have engaged in 1742 in the fashionable sport of opera production, one in which so much money was usually lost. Walpole dismisses the first wife of Sir Francis as "a poor forlorn presbyterian prude." The good side of Dashwood as a man appears in his plucky effort to save Admiral Byng from being shot as the scapegoat of the Minorca failure in 1757. In 1762 the barony of Despensers was given to him, and in November, 1763, the Wilkes trouble of the parody of Pope's "Essay on Man" came to a head. The ten years to 1770 represent one of the most puzzling decades of the eighteenth century. It may all be clear



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DINING-ROOM FIREPLACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to a confirmed partisan, but to an impartial historian it appears as a confused welter of struggling politicians with as little unity of purpose as could be traced in any chance scrap in a large school. "Wilkes and Liberty" stood for nothing, Junius' letters seem more like blackmail than the "saeva indignation" of a Cato or a Brutus. The memoirs and correspondence of the time explain Johnson's definition of a patriot, which, one is inclined to think, has too often been explained away. Even at the time the situation was so obscure that Lord Bute was seen everywhere, a veritable political bogeyman. It is quite clear, however, that, after his resignation in 1763 he lost all influence with George III. Mansfield had undoubtedly far more to say, but it is quite easy to exaggerate even his part as a possible power behind the throne. By 1770 things had so far calmed down that George III, through

Lord North, was able to direct affairs for the twelve years ending in the crisis of 1782 when a new system was found to be imperative. If we look back, therefore, it seems as if the first ten years of his reign can only be explained as a period of personal struggles between rival politicians during which the King was playing off one leader against another, until in Lord North he had found the agent he required. During this first decade there was an accompanying transition in architecture, the earlier Georgian giving way to the newer movement brought in by Robert Adam, and in this

West Wycombe we may well believe stood for the more serious side of Despencer's life. He rebuilt the church on the hill overlooking the estate in 1763, crowning the old tower with an Italian belfry stage which is effective at a distance. The great mausoleum was due to a legacy left by George Lord Doddington, whose diary is so often quoted for its detail of the first years of the reign of George III.

West Wycombe at this time must have presented a gay scene to judge by the old prints of the grounds which show cascades and garden features reminiscent of Versailles.



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MAIN HALL AND STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

time of stress and change many wild schemes were attempted, and not a few failures and punishments were incurred.

Lord Le Despencer appears to advantage in 1778 when, as Chatham remarked, he alone called upon the dying statesman between his seizure in the House of Lords and his death. By such things as this Dashwood, despite his troubled career, earned the epitaph of 1781, "Revered, Respected and Beloved by all who knew him." The stress, no doubt, was on the last word but one.

The Earl of Guildford, writing from Wroxton on July 8th, 1780, to Mrs. Delany, gives an amusing account of a visit to the house. He had expected Le Despencer to be out, but he met him in the open portico and began to show him his curiosities. Both were infirm, and they hobbled out. "I did very awkwardly looking upon it as probably the last journey I should ever take. The place is pretty but very whimsical." The story of West Wycombe as a house is far from easy to disentangle. The apparently



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CENTRE PANEL DRAWING-ROOM CEILING.

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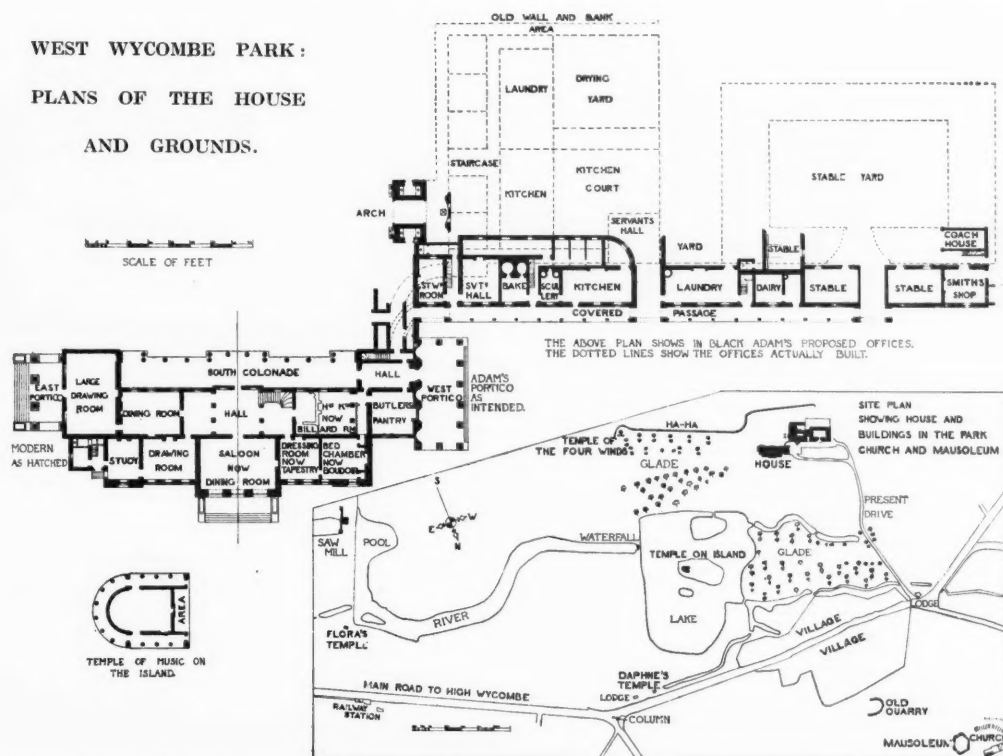


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THE GREAT DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

WEST WYCOMBE PARK:
PLANS OF THE HOUSE
AND GROUNDS.



simple classic structure hides the history of various transformations from the days when it was a simple brick, three-storied house surrounded apparently by other buildings which later on gave place to the present park.

eventually decorated and screened by the great two-storied colonnade, which is the unique feature of the house.

Unfortunately the family papers have been destroyed, and though there are numerous drawings of schemes relative

There is an old map-like plan in existence showing an improved approach to the house on its southern face with an oval turning space and a regular fore-court. On the north side appears a long and wide terrace, while at the east end is a formal garden enclosed by walls. At the west end are office and stable buildings through which the road makes an oblique line, as would in fact be the case if the present drive ran straight up to the house instead of making a bend to the west.

The hesitation as to which was to be the entrance side of the house ended in a compromise selection of the west end, the southern face being



to the house, they are neither signed nor dated, and very often are not even headed by any descriptive title. Among these I have picked out two drawings which, by their method and finish, can certainly be identified as from the office of Robert Adam. One of these drawings is represented in the Soane Collection by an unfinished duplicate; the other is quite new.

In "Vitruvius Britannicus," Vol. V, published in 1771, a plan and an elevation of the house as altered are given, and the unknown name of "J. Donowell" appears as the architect. I have seen no plans at the house suggesting his name, and the Italian Borghis, who decorated the ceilings of the house and of the church, seems the most likely person to have assisted Baron Le Despencer in his building operations.

That a good deal of the work was amateurish the story of the office block suggests. It differs entirely from Adam's proposals, while agreeing with a very rough and much



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IN THE TAPESTRY PARLOUR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

altered draft in pen and ink, which is clearly not the work of an architect. The plan is very extravagant, with long brick vaulted corridors, the purpose of which is far from clear.

The transformation of the house appears to have begun on the northern side, for which many schemes were made prior to the adoption of the design of the present suitable, if unexciting, façade. Possibly the large drawing-room was then added with the east or doric portico,

a feature which has little relation of scale to the present house as a whole. Here stood the original enclosed formal garden according to the old plan. In the pediment of the east portico Apollo and the Muses were represented, there were busts of Augustus and Livia and statues of Caracci and Corregio. In a like spirit the western portico was styled the "Temple of Bacchus."

The south front appears to have been the subject of innumerable experimental designs, chiefly in the direction



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THE BOUDOIR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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"C.L."

of screening the existing three storeyed elevation by a colonnade of one tier. One sketch of an interesting character shows such a colonnade interrupted of a central feature of some boldness, the inspiration of which appears to be Italian. It would be very satisfactory if it could be shown that the idea for the two tier colonnade and for the characteristic doubling and grouping of the columns came from Robert Adam. It is very like the treatment he suggested later on for the street architecture of a great projected public improvement at Edinburgh.

The portico at the west end presents a difficult problem. It is claimed for Nicholas Revett, Stuart's partner for the "Antiquities of Athens," in the account of his life given in the fourth volume of that work, which appeared in 1816. Revett died in 1804 at the age of eighty-four, and except for a church in the Greek style at Ayot St. Lawrence, near Welwyn in Herts, built in 1788, very little actual building can be traced to him. In May, 1764, he went to Ionia with Chandler for the Dilettanti Society, having returned from Athens in the beginning of 1755. His time while in England was taken up with the first volume of the "Antiquities of Athens," which appeared in 1762.

Apart from the actual Adam drawing for the portico here illustrated, Robert was engaged at Shardeloes, 1759-61, and in August of that last year the Mayor and Corporation formally approved of his plan for the interesting little domed Market Hall at High Wycombe, two miles away, which still exists. I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Thurlow, who has searched the Corporation records, for this important date. It is very possible, therefore, that Revett was employed in some capacity at this time, and that in view of Despencer's prominent position and interest in the Dilettanti Society, which had promoted Stuart's and Revett's book, the detail of the portico as designed by Adam was modified in a Greek sense. As built it differs from Adam's drawing in that there are no niches, and two doorways are altered, and the upper series of panels is omitted. The general effect, however, is that of Adam's proposal and the portico measures only one foot less in width. As it is most inaccurately shown in Donowel's plan of 1771, in "Vitruvius Britannicus," the latter could not have seen it. The only drawing at the house with Revett's name is one undated for an unimportant cottage. It does not seem likely that he was responsible for the east Doric portico, which has not a Greek character, but there is a small alcove of Greek design attached to the offices near the west portico which may have been his.

It has to be remembered that Despencer had a large house in Hanover Square at the north-west angle, which

has since been rebuilt as the Oriental Club. For this house Robert Adam at an early and unknown date made designs for a single storey narrow wing addition at the back of the house. It was to be about 95ft. long and to border upon the side street on the northern flank of the house. It contained a library, about 60ft. by 14ft., consisting of two octagonal ante-rooms and a central double apsidal apartment. The decoration shown on the drawing is of the early Shardeloes type and the date is probably earlier than 1765, and more likely to be of about 1763. It anticipates crudely the gallery of Syon.

Probably Adam's connection with Despencer had terminated before the church at West Wycombe was begun, towards the end of 1763.

As an early instance of the use of Greek detail, the west portico of West Wycombe is of great interest. Robert Adam certainly entertained a brief idea of such direct use, as a pencil note on the design of a screen wall for Fox, Lord Holland, says, "Le Roy's Ionic." He also made a note of a Greek cornice used by his friend Stuart at Spencer House. This, however, was a passing mood, and he fortunately proceeded upon his own lines.

Entering the house, the segment vaulted hall, leading straight on to the southern colonnade, shows traces of a Greek Revival taste.

From Donowel's plan we see that the present billiard-room has been formed out of two smaller rooms and a passage.

The real hall is very spacious with a double screen of columns and contains the famous mahogany inlaid staircase. The ceiling here shows the Italian chiaroscuro work which serves as a preparation for the greater freedom of the frescoed glories of the salon. This room, which is now the dining-room, looks out upon the lake by three great arched windows and it must be described as a noble apartment. The marble mantelpiece is remarkable for a panel of Androcles and the lion sculptured in high relief. The walls



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DINING-ROOM DOOR.

"C.L."

are hung with red silk, the cornice is enriched with gold, while the dado in dark walnut is relieved by the white and Sienna marbles of the door casings and mantelpiece.

The original dining-room is now a small drawing-room leading into the greater room beyond. Both of these rooms are remarkable for their sumptuous character with frescoed ceilings of full Italian life and colour. The scene in the larger room is, "A Council of the Gods," a subject that afforded scope for a variety of characterisation and display.

Marbles, white and coloured, inlaid woods, rich silk embroidery and gilding, all play their part in building up the general effect, which is at once decorative and rich.

Stepping out on to the raised platform of the east portico a fine view of a green glade refreshes the eye. Whether it is adequate compensation for the original enclosed privy garden must be left for rival schools of gardening to debate.

Returning through the house and across the hall the original bedroom suite is now the Tapestry Parlour and a boudoir. The rustic backgrounds of the wall hangings have a general tone of mingled greens, reds, and blues. The wood-cased mantel is painted in pattern work which is singularly harmonious with the hangings, and executed mainly in gold on a red ground. The adjacent room is silk hung, the general tone being greenish blue. The ceiling is of a French type with gilding and flower painting surrounding a large picture in the centre. The frieze of the room is curious with its small figures divided by palm trees, a processional in green and white colouring with the larger spacings in yellow treated on the lines of a marble inlay. There is a fine cabinet on a stand and a console table with a marble inlaid top.

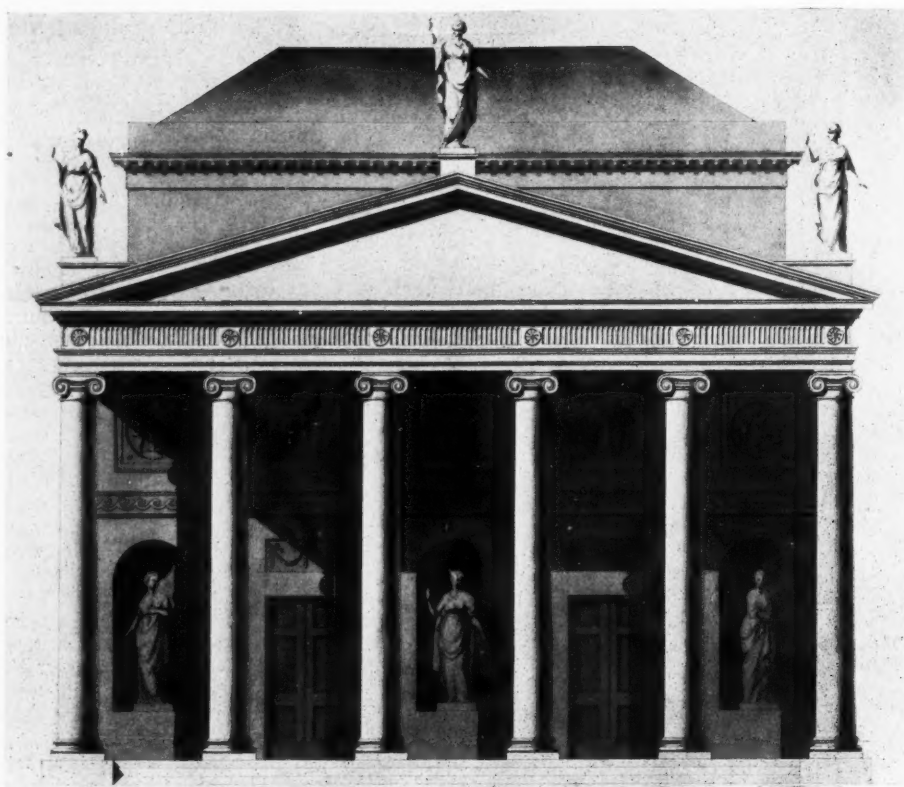
Ascending the staircase the lower hall is repeated with screens of Ionic pillars and a rich plasterwork ceiling. A few steps lead up to the great library situated over the salon which was evidently intended to be the *Capo da Opera* of the house. It is a noble room, however, in its present white and brown of plasterwork and old bookcases. A frieze of family portraits attracts attention. Vere, Earl of Westmorland, occupies the centre place over the fireplace. The sculpture figurines are of great interest and form with the rich carvings of the mantelpiece itself a centre to the room that rivets the attention.

The survey of the grounds and some account of the remarkable church and mausoleum must be reserved until next week.

Copyright.

ROBERT ADAM'S DESIGN FOR THE WEST PORTICO.

"C.L."



"NATIVES."

THE poor Britons—there is some good in them after all—they produce an oyster." So wrote Sallust, fifty years before our era, at a time when his countrymen were already cultivating oysters at Baïæ and serving them at every feast of epicures. Seneca the Wise gave proof of his wisdom in matters gastronomic when he apostrophised the oyster as follows: "Oyster so dear to people of taste! . . . never causing an indisposition, not even when eaten to excess, for thou art easy of digestion." In Britain itself familiarity bred contempt, and we find Chaucer classifying oysters with mussels as food of the common people:

For many a muscle and many an oistre
When other men have been ful wel at ese
Hath been our food.

The oyster was slow to come into its own as a delicacy, but the zenith of its popularity was reached in the middle of the last century, when over two hundred and fifty millions were placed annually upon our markets at a wholesale value

of over half a million pounds. A considerable proportion were dredged in the open sea, particularly off the Wicklow coast, but most were obtained from the mouths and lower waters of estuaries. In some few of these the smaller oysters obtained in the dredges were relaid in selected spots, free from the danger of currents, or known to be especially favourable for rapid growth. Some were laid on flats, only exposed at lowest spring tides, for convenience of collecting for market. There was little systematic culture, and while some areas became dredged out, others were choked by weed and mud. Yet others suffered from additional land drainage, the growth of ports and the wash of many steamers. The industry, conducted on these primitive lines, was in the hands mainly of longshore fishermen, and, as these fell on bad times, so oyster culture dwindled, with the result that, with a decreased supply, the oyster became a luxury to the rich, a food for invalids, no longer a real factor in the food supply of the nation.

A few enlightened East Coast men saw a good opening and developed a system of oyster farming, profitable enough from the producer's standpoint, but confined to a small area. Then came the oyster scare of 1895. Articles appeared in every paper. Any illness that could be ascribed to oysters was so ascribed. Nearly every writer assumed that even a single one of those mysterious bacilli or microbes, if present in an oyster, would be of danger if eaten, not knowing how many tens of thousands of them live in us to our benefit and how many thousands we daily consume.

Years after difficulties had arisen the Government issued a report dealing with the causes rather than their cure. But the mischief was done and the reconstruction of the industry demands the expenditure of money and time, not only on culture, but first and foremost on such scientific observation and work as shall prevent a second collapse. Not only must the culture as such be successful, but the consumer must be protected against the dissemination of disease. In the meantime a Government Department supposed itself to be confined to administration and preservation, not to extension. Development might prejudice individual interests, and public opinion had to be educated to the larger view—that of the welfare of the body corporate—the nation. Only by complete control of a circumscribed fishery could the requisite investigations on pollution, sedimentation, growth and fattening be carried out.

Within the present year this has been effected by the patriotic action of the Duchy of Cornwall in acquiring the fishery of the Helford River, an isolated estuary in an almost uninhabited agricultural district, ten miles south of Falmouth. The Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has control of the fishery for scientific experiment and development, and for the present the commercial side is subordinated to these ends, though the success of economic science can only be judged by commerce. Scientific results must be slow in coming, for science is giving its all to the war. Meantime, there is the need for an increased supply of home-produced food of best quality. If popular taste for and confidence in the oyster can be re-established, we may see great oyster fisheries again not merely in Helford River but in a dozen derelict estuaries. The

failure of a fishery is a national loss, not merely of food supply, but of a class of men who are the very backbone of the Navy, already trained to the sea, and with the traditions of the Service an inherited instinct.

Of oysters there are many kinds, the pearl oyster of Ceylon and the Persian Gulf, the shell oysters of the Red and most tropical seas, but the only three oysters known to our markets are the Native, the American, and the Portuguese or Spanish, now being sold as the Rock oyster. Of these the Native, though smaller, is infinitely superior in flavour, in digestibility and in safety from pollution. It is a distinct species, *Ostrea edulis*, and differs from the others in having no beard to cut away and in possessing both male and female organs in the white lump near the hinge of its shell, otherwise known as the "heel," which for the rest is mostly liver. This fact makes the oyster extraordinarily prolific, self fertilisation being possible. In the winter the eggs are mature and as soon as the temperature of the water rises to about 65deg. F. they are laid. They pass in between the lower lobes of the animal, the gills, remaining for some days within the shells. Often in May or June the East Coast waters are thick with them, but at Helford spawning is less regular, sometimes occurring in September. The eggs, when massed in the shell, form black grains, half a million or more to each oyster, but in the water they are minute transparent swimmers at the mercy of the currents. The vast majority perish, but some few find clean shells or "culch" on which to settle, this being laid down by the cultivator. In the late autumn baby oysters, called "spat," may be seen as little green dots on the dead shells, a hundred or two on each piece of culch dredged up. This habit of attachment is made use of by the cultivator of France, who puts down hurdles, floating brushwood, or even convex tiles to catch the spat. In a year's time the oyster is upwards of an inch across and in this condition is known as "brood." The brood is collected in England by dredging up the culch and is relaid for two years on ground levelled and prepared by raking and harrowing, generally just off the rush of the tidal currents, ground known by experience to be good for growth. These "laying grounds" or "parks" are in many places walled or staked off, and may be exposed at the lowest tides, but at Helford the open estuary is used for the purpose and the ground is always covered.

The oysters are next removed to laying grounds chosen for their fattening properties. These are commonly along some flat shore near the low tide level where they are gently swept by the tidal currents. In the next two years the growth

in breadth lessens in rate, but the fish become thicker near the hinge, in the "heel," and it acquires, even in the early winter, that peculiar white fattiness in this part characteristic of the fish in good condition. The part used at Helford for this purpose is by Port Navas Creek below rocky shores, capped by dense woods. It is in many respects an ideal ground, being gently swept by the tides which carry over the oysters the minute floating plants (diatoms) and other animal and plant remains on which the oyster feeds.

The oyster cultivator is beset with difficulties. He has to fight boring whelks of different sorts, boring sponges and boring worms, besides starfish which coil round the shells and by preventing them from opening smother the fish. Off Essex and Kent the oysters contend with the slipper limpet for food. Dead seaweed must be carefully removed from the laying grounds, or in its decay it may set up conditions especially suited to micro-organisms, a matter now being experimented on at Helford, where there is neither house nor town sewage to complicate experiment.

Further, there are perpetually recurring points relating to spatting, growth and fattening. Oysters are generally believed to spat best where the water is salt, and to fatten best where there is admixture of fresh water, but as yet there is no evidence of this. At Helford one part of the lower waters is as good as another for spatting, the amount collected depending on the amount of clean culch to which the spat can attach itself. Early growth is often better where the bottom is remarkably clean, but the growth of the three year old to a suitable thickness and fatness for market can only be satisfactorily accomplished on firm mud. Fragments and particles of seaweed scarcely seem to serve for food, but particles of land leaves are at Helford abundantly consumed and produce a condition which is everything that can be required.

The high cultural methods of France find employment for a quarter of a million workers and are worthy of experimental repetition in this country. Also, there is the public to be educated; it knows little of the nutritive value of its food, but it is quite willing to be taught. It will swing back to oysters as soon as it finds that they are as reasonably safe as the control of Billingsgate by the Fishmongers' Company has made them. The industry is essentially that of the small holder, and it is to be hoped that the present experiments at Helford may demonstrate that oysters can be produced at such rates that they may again become a common article of diet yielding a profit that may stimulate the reconstruction of the fisheries of many estuaries.

NOTTS AND DERBY SPORTSMEN AND THE WAR.—II.

BY GEORGE BIGWOOD.

THE Committee of the Derbyshire County Cricket Club in their last annual report said that their supporters had to face a position without parallel in the history of county cricket. There could be no championship cricket, and county cricketers had joined the Colours so freely that anything of a competitive nature was quite out of the question. Derbyshire cricketers have not been deaf to the call of patriotism. Captain R. R. C. Baggallay, the captain of the team, was a retired officer of the 11th Hussars, and on the outbreak of war he returned to the regiment for service. Since March, 1911, he had belonged to the Special Reserve of Officers. Captain Baggallay has been in France for several months, and was recently mentioned in despatches. Mr. J. Chapman, who is assisting with the work at a Government remount department, is an ex-captain of Derbyshire County. He is a very brilliant batsman, and holds, with Arnold Warner, the record for the ninth wicket for Derbyshire.

A prominent member of the County Cricket Club Committee and of the Derbyshire Friars Cricket Club—Lieutenant-Colonel C. C. Herbert-Stepney—has been appointed to the command of the 16th Battalion Sherwood Foresters. This battalion has been added to the



CAPTAIN R. R. C. BAGGALAY.
Mentioned in despatches.

Army List during the last six months and is known as the Derby Battalion. The 15th (Service) Battalion is the Nottingham Battalion. Colonel Herbert-Stepney belonged to the Reserve of Officers of the King's Royal Rifles. He retired from The King's with the rank of captain. Since the organisation of the Territorial Army he has acted as secretary of the Derbyshire Territorial Force Association. In his photograph he is wearing the uniform of the Rifles.

Mr. Gilbert Curgenvin joined the Westminster Dragoons (the 2nd County of London Regiment) as a sergeant, and he has since accepted a commission. Mr. Curgenvin belongs to an old cricket family. Both his father and his uncle distinguished themselves in Derbyshire county cricket. On leaving Repton School Mr. Curgenvin visited the Colonies, and on his return home he found a place in the county team. But the war brought his cricket to an abrupt termination. He felt that he might be doing more valuable work elsewhere. The commissioned ranks of the 11th (Service) Battalion South Lancashire Regiment includes another Derbyshire cricketer, Captain T. Forester, a fine all-round player. Captain Forester was regarded as a good medium bowler and left-hand bat. For a time he played for Warwickshire as a professional.

Mr. G. L. Jackson, another of the Derby County all-round players, is serving as second-lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade. He had only just left school when he found a place in the Eleven, so that he has not had much experience of first-class cricket. But he gave great promise, and a permanent place for him seemed assured. Lieutenant N. M. Hughes-Hallett commands a platoon in the Shropshire Light Infantry. This officer-cricketer was educated at Haileybury. He secured his place in the county team for his batting performances.

"Dick" Sale holds a lieutenant's commission in the 8th (Service) Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry. Mr. Sale is an old Reptonian, and belongs to a well known Derby family. After leaving Repton he went to Oxford, where he got his Blue both for cricket and Association football. When war was declared he was one of the masters at Shrewsbury School. Mr. G. G. Walkden and Mr. H. F. Wright, two of the old players, hold the rank of captain in the 4th North Midland Howitzer Brigade, Royal Field Artillery (Territorial Force), and Mr. F. E. F. Wright is a lieutenant in the 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. Two other ex-players who are now with the Colours are Captain L. Eardley-Simpson of the 4th North Midland Howitzer Brigade and Captain F. C. Newton of the Derbyshire Yeomanry. Mr. S. H. Wood, M.P., is a captain in the 4th Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment, and Mr. T. G. O. Cole is a lieutenant in the Denbighshire Yeomanry. Mr. R. B. Rickman has got a commission in the Notts and Derby Regiment, and Mr. G. M. Bucks' on is a subaltern in the Derbyshire Yeomanry. The secretary of the Derby County Club, Mr. W. T. Taylor, is a captain in the 14th (Service) Battalion Notts and Derby Regiment, and Blackledge, the club coach, is "doing his bit" as a corporal in the 5th Hampshire Regiment (Territorial Force) at Allahabad. Of the other professionals, H. Wild, J. Horsley, W. Reader and F. Bracey have enlisted in the 5th (Reserve) Battalion of the Notts and Derby Regiment, and F. Root is a corporal in the Leicestershire Army Service Corps.

Turning to Nottingham County Cricketers we must first of all mention Lieutenant A. W. Carr. This cricketer was with his regiment, the 5th (Royal Irish) Lancers, during the great charge at Mons, which for sheer gallantry will always be favourably compared with the charge of the famous Light Brigade. One writer, describing the charge of the cavalry



CAPTAIN F. C. NEWTON.
Of the Derbyshire Yeomanry.

in this early stage of the war, said: "We simply galloped like rabbits in front of the line of guns, men and horses falling in all directions." The retreat from Mons, in which the cavalry displayed a distinguished part, was as celebrated as Sir John Moore's retreat from Corunna. In the charge Lieutenant Carr had his horse shot under him, but fortunately he escaped serious injury. P. J. S. Pearson-Gregory, who captained the Notts Eleven in a few matches in 1913, has got a captain's commission in the Grenadier Guards. Captain Gregory was a brilliant batsman at Eton. He is spoken of as one of the most brilliant bats the school has known. He played a fine innings in the last Eton and Harrow match. He has also played for the Household Brigade and the Brigade of Guards.

R. E. Hemingway, who occasionally played for Notts and for Gloucester, in October, 1914, accepted a commission in the 8th Territorial Battalion Sherwood Foresters. Lieutenant Hemingway took part in some of the stiff fighting recently and is now reported killed. The only well known professional cricketer on the

Notts County side to join the Colours is George Gunn. Early this year he joined the Mechanical Transport section of the Army Service Corps which was formed in Nottingham. He has now gone to the front as a motor driver.

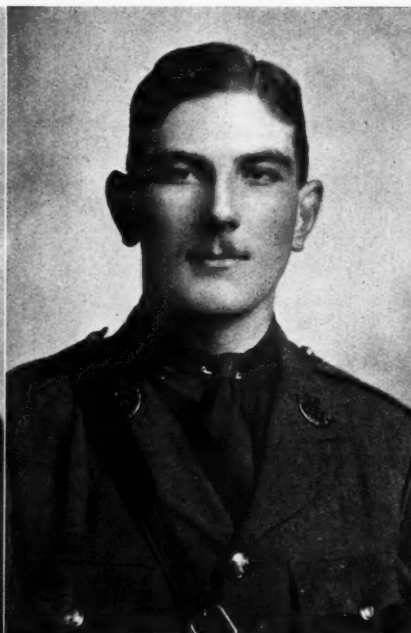
L. C. Hodges, who is well known in Notts cricket and hockey circles, is a Lieutenant in the South Notts Hussars, and is now with his regiment in the Dardanelles. He is reported to be among the wounded in the recent fighting. H. A. Hodges also volunteered for active service. This member of the family made a reputation as a Rugby player. He played in the International match in the 1905-6 season.

Another distinguished athlete, F. C. Tonkin, was gazetted to the 7th (Service) Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment in February of this year. Tonkin played for the Magdala Football Club. V. H. Cartwright, the famous Rugby player, who got his Blue at Oxford, accepted a commission early this year in the Royal Marines. Cartwright is one of the best known of modern Rugby players.

Lieutenant F. W. Chapman, of the Royal Artillery, is a member of the Notts Magdala Club. The professional players of the Association game have responded magnificently. It was computed that in May last no fewer than 1,760 footballers had left Nottingham for military service and that 336 club officials and members had also enlisted.



CAPTAIN L. EARDLEY-SIMPSON.
4th North Midland Howitzer Brigade.



LIEUT. N. M. HUGHES-HALLETT.
Shropshire Light Infantry.



LIEUT.-COL. C. HERBERT-STEPNEY.
Commanding 16th Battalion Sherwood Foresters.



CAPTAIN W. T. TAYLOR.

14th (Service) Battalion Notts and Derby Regiment.



LIEUT. G. L. JACKSON.

Rifle Brigade.



CAPTAIN G. G. WALKDEN.

4th North Midland Howitzer Brigade, R.F.A.

Gibson of Nottingham Forest is a sergeant in the Footballers' Battalion, and in the same unit are A. West and E. Bassett, two of Notts County players.

About 50 per cent. of the hockey players in the fourteen clubs in Notts have joined the Colours, and many of them who enlisted in the ranks have since been gazetted to commissions.

The brothers Harry and Albert Cottrell, professional golfers, of the 9th Battalion Sherwood Foresters, who lived with their parents at Guiseley, were killed in action on August 9. A great deal of pathos surrounds the end of these two soldiers. The Rev. W. Warburton, formerly a curate

at Guiseley but now a chaplain with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, writes home to say that Harry was wounded first, and while Albert was binding up his wounds the latter was shot in the head and died almost immediately. A few minutes later Harry was killed while attending to his brother, so that the two passed away almost at the same time. Mr. Warburton adds: "It is a sad tale of two brave young men; but I am sure it will comfort their parents to know that they were together at the last and even died helping each other. It seems to me a very beautiful and a very fitting ending to two very useful lives."

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

ACCORDING to the dictionary the lullaby is "a soothing refrain used to please or pacify infants"; or, as Shakespeare has it, "a nurse's song of lullaby to bring her baby sleep." In origin it was not, strictly speaking, literature at all. In the early stages of human development probably the mother hummed a tune to her child either fitting words which in many cases were nonsense words to it or using one or other of those smooth-sounding vocables that occur so frequently in the lullaby as printed. "Baloo, baloo," sings the Scottish mother; "Shoheen sho," the Irish; and "Hush-a-bye," the English. If we consider this, it will help to provide a test for judging the merits of a lullaby. It should be simple and not too poignant, its model the folk-song. It would have been good if Miss Adelaide Gosset had been a little more strict in applying this or some other criterion to the verses collected in her interesting volume, *Lullabies of the Four Nations* (Alexander Moring). Nearly every man and woman possesses a memory of some sort of lullaby crooned by nurse or mother. It need not necessarily have been about sleep or children. A Scottish lady of the old type hushed her baby asleep with Jacobite songs or Border ballads. We have often heard cottage women soothing a child to rest with popular hymns of the day, such as "There is a happy land, Far, far away," and so on. These in the truest sense become lullabies. On the other hand, there are many beautiful little poems written about children and sleep and included in this volume which could never have been written for a nurse to sing. Among them we would include even Lord Tennyson's exquisite "Sweet and low, sweet and low, wind of the Western Sea." The language is too carefully chiselled, the rhythmic scheme too elaborate. Nearly all the poems by Walter de la Mare which appear in this volume ought, in our opinion, to have

been debarred. No one will, we imagine, infer from this any under-estimation of the gifts which have given to Walter de la Mare a unique place in the literature of his time. In style, fancy a mysticism that is ever enchanting and never verges on the line which makes the current mysticism of the day stink in the nostrils; a delightfulness all his own places this poet, we believe, in a niche peculiar to himself. But these are not the qualities that should be naturally sought for in a perfect lullaby. It is unimaginable that any grandam should croon over a crying baby words such as the following:

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul!
The singing mouse sings plaintively,
The sweet night-bird in the chestnut-tree—
They sing together, bird and mouse,
In starlight, in darkness, lonely, sweet,
The wild notes and the faint notes meet—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul!

There is far too much intellect in it for the purpose. Though they are much inferior as poetry, such poems as Lady Nairne's "Baloo Loo, Lammie," and Richard Call's "Baloo, Baloo, My Wee Wee Thing," are far better lullabies. Take another thing of Walter de la Mare's:

"Hide and seek," says the Wind
In the shade of the woods;
"Hide and seek," says the Moon
To the hazel buds;
"Hide and seek," says the Cloud,
Star on to star;
"Hide and seek," says the Wave
At the harbour bar;
"Hide and seek," say I
To myself, and step
Out of the dream of Wake
Into the dream of Sleep!

This little poem appeared first in our own pages, and the oftener we read it we like it the better, but it is no lullaby. In spite of this fault finding, we are very far from wishing to decry a book which is full of interest, although the editor of it has admitted a great many things that a more fastidious taste would have rejected.

Among the modern lullabies that are beyond criticism we would place William Sharp's "Lennavan-mo," which has the true lilt which a lullaby requires:

Lennavan-mo,
Lennavan-mo,
Who is it swinging you to and fro,
With a long low swing and a sweet low croon,
And the loving words of the mother's rune?

How simple this is compared with one printed close to it by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

How he sleepeth! having drunken
Weary childhood's mandragore,
From his pretty eyes have sunken
Pleasures, to make room for more—

Sleeping near the withered nosegay, which he pulled the day before.

We could fancy an elderly female lecturer at a college singing this, but no one else. Here, too, is a type of folk-song that makes an excellent lullaby:

O, can ye sew cushions?
Or can ye sew sheets?
And can ye sing ba-lu-loo
When the bairn greets?
And hee and baw birdie,
And hee and baw lamb,
And hee and baw birdie
My bonnie wee lamb.

Hee O, wee O, what would I do wi' you?
Black's the life that I lead wi' you;
Mony o' you, little for to gie you,
Hee O, wee O, what would I do wi' you?

Nicholas Breton's "An Excellent Song Called Lullaby," deserves a place in any anthology:

Come, little babe, come, seely soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
Born as I doubt to all our dole,
And to thyself unhappy chief;
Sing lullaby, and lap it warm,
Poor soul, that thinks no creature harm!

Thou little think'st and less dost know
The cause of all thy mother's moan;
Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
And I myself am all alone;
Why dost thou weep? why dost thou wail?
And know'st thou yet what thou dost ail!

The Dream of Gerontius, by John Henry Cardinal Newman. (John Lane.)

A NEW edition of Cardinal Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*, with an introduction by Mr. Gordon Tidy and illustrations by Miss Stella Langdale, has now been published, and in its fresh dress the attention of numbers of readers who have hitherto known this beautiful poem only by name—and that is tantamount to saying that the readers are likely to be young—will doubtless be directed to it. The fact gives rise to speculation. What impression does this poem, apart from its famous musical setting, really make on a generation separated by fifty years from the time of its inception, and by something like a century from "the Oxford student of 1830"? On its poetic side *The Dream* is surely never likely to challenge criticism; Newman had a very sensitive perception of the beauty and fitness of words that carries him triumphantly through even this most difficult task of portraying the experiences of a soul just before and just after death. But they are the experiences of an orthodox and devout Catholic soul, or, as William Barry in his "Newman" has it, the dream "pierces, indeed, beyond the veil, but in strict accordance or analogy with what every Catholic holds to be there . . . at once an allegory and an act of faith." The allegory is unchangingly fine, but one surmises that as an act of faith the poem may have lost, for the general reader to-day, something of its power. It is not a question of whether religion to-day is less powerful a force than in the past, but only of whether such a poem as *The Dream of Gerontius* can satisfy modern spiritual aspiration as we know that it satisfied in Newman's day even so widely different a thinker as Charles Kingsley. People who bewail the wane of religion at the present time seem to forget that there are certain things vital in every age to the soul; however they may change their form, these things do not change their essence, and the spirit of religion, of devotion, of dedication to an ideal, of reaching out to the unknown and the perfect, is one of them. But the change in form has certainly been great and rapid of late years. The old creeds no longer satisfy the young questing soul; more and more the modern intellect rejects the idea of a personal Deity and of positive religions; more and more it tends towards what is generally called the religion of humanity. The old idea that the heart of man is radically evil, and can be saved only by a great and powerful external force, is giving place to the conviction that it is radically good, with an innate sense of justice and a love of beauty for its own sake that call simply for self-development. As Maeterlinck expresses it: "Religion raised all souls, mechanically, so

to speak, to heights that we should attain by our own powers." The past worshipped a God in Heaven, and because Heaven was far and invisible, helped imagination by conceiving it in more or less material forms of earth; the present stands awed yet eager before its discovery of the god in man, of the fact that "the kingdom of God is within you." The ideal towards which the present is stumbling is to make, in a new and lofty sense, "the best of this world," and by means of increased justice, liberty and goodwill among men, to find its way towards whatever place in the universe may be the final goal of humanity.

This, of course, is no new thing under the sun. Poets and mystics in all ages have proclaimed it as truth. But what is new is that the present is essentially an age in which increasing numbers of people who are not, strictly speaking, either poets or mystics have begun to recognise it too. And by such a generation the old heaven is felt to leave little scope for the imagination, to fret the spirit by its impassable bounds. It may be conjectured, therefore, that Newman's angels, demons, souls in purgatory and the like, will not now stimulate but rather incline to check the imagination. Probably the parts of *The Dream* most likely to kindle the thought and interest of the modern reader are the earlier passages. Newman's portrayal of the process of dying is an extraordinarily powerful imaginative flight—or rather, as the introduction convincingly argues, a remarkable record of a vivid personal experience, induced by a conviction of immediately impending death. Those who have been through a similar experience, when they either were or felt themselves to be at the point of death, will not need to agree doctrinally with the writer of *The Dream* in order to acknowledge that here he describes, with masterly skill, sensations all but transcending description.

"That sense of ruin which is worse than pain,
That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man; as though I bent
Over the dizzy brink
Of some sheer infinite descent;
Or worse, as though
Down, down for ever I was falling through
The solid framework of created things. . . ."

A bad accident, semi-drowning, the influence of an anæsthetic—there are many chances of life that will put many people in touch, not only imaginatively, but actually, with such a passage as this. *The Dream of Gerontius* was written twenty years after Newman became a Catholic, and doubtless contains his final conclusions on life, death and immortality. Whether the reader finds himself able to agree with these or not, he cannot withhold from this poem the tribute that it is a beautiful expression of a beautiful, sincere and noble soul. And, after all, as Newman himself once said: "It is but a small thing to gain the praise of those who agree with ourselves." The introduction is interesting and helpful, and finally disposes of the rather foolish legend (why is it such a favourite at all times, one wonders?) that *The Dream* was consigned by its writer to the waste-paper basket and thence rescued by a chance and miraculously opportune visitor. One printer's error may be noted. The article referred to correctly on page 4 as being in "The Library" for 1905 is printed as "The Library, 1908," on page 31. Miss Langdale's ten illustrations are delicately imaginative work and catch the very spirit of the poem.

Froth and Bubble, by M. A. Harbord. (Edward Arnold.)

THIS is a record of his own life by Mr. Harbord, one of the fifteen children of a parson, who left school at sixteen and was sent off to Iowa. He was to have gone into a bank; but the bank had ceased to be, and he became a cowboy. Later he went to South Africa, fought through the Matabele and Boer wars, and then held a commission in the Transvaal Town Police. The changes that followed Lord Milner's retirement made Mr. Harbord's position too difficult; and he sailed for British East Africa, where he stayed till he was very severely mauled by a leopard; and soon after this point he stops the record. Much of his book is about horses and dogs. "Orses and dogs is some men's fancy," said the man on the coach, "they're wittles and drink to me—lodging, wife, and children—snuff, tobacco, and sleep"; and Mr. Harbord might say much the same. His two poets are Adam Lindsay Gordon and Mr. Kipling; but he should not attribute to the dead man one of the best known ballads of the living poet (page 179). The remarks about the service of the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa are of interest at the present time; and one is glad to read that Mr. Harbord formed a high opinion of General Mahon, who is now in command of our troops in the Balkans.

The Extra Day, by Algernon Blackwood. (Macmillan.)

THE value of Algernon Blackwood's work lies in its effort to express a new word. In a sense, each of his books fails, for if he succeeded the word would be pronounced, and something astonishing would happen in our life and literature. The great machine would slow down and creak and stop. All those who rush by all day would stop and listen. If ever this great word is interpolated there will be a pause. One has an idea that until that word has been pronounced Blackwood will go on writing in this world and the next, but that if he should ever, either through accident or effort, pronounce it, he will cease writing and betake himself to some altogether new mode of expression and field of action. Whether this word is one which he once knew when a child, "trailing clouds of glory," or whether it is a word he has to divine or attain to, it is difficult to say. It may perhaps be rather a word that is "in the air," a word going ahead of our age, one after which all poets and dreamers and writers and the age itself are following as fast as they can and trying to overtake.

The Extra Day is a striving ahead and an effort. Near the end of the book Maria describes her Extra Day as a Birthday, and Uncle Felix half divines her secret—"For a birthday was the opening of life, it was the beginning. Maria had got it always. All days for her were birthdays."

And for such people as Maria, for those who can look on every day as a new beginning, as a day full of promise and rich gifts, as a precious gift of life handed out anew each morning to be lived out in sunshine or shadow, in joy or in grief, full of blessing under whatever aspect—for those who "never explain but just accept," as the children did, this book is real and of vital interest. There are many such children, of varying ages—from eight to eighty maybe—and they are beacons and guides to others who have not yet learnt to live so close to reality, and who are still somewhat confused and stumbling in this material and actual world.

Mr. Blackwood raises us to the heights, whence with him we view the world and its people who live and hope and yearn and seek, and to whom has been given the promise that they who seek shall find, that to those who ask shall be given, and that the doors at which they knock shall be opened. And all people are seen to be seeking, to be occupied in a continual search—for something, an expectation of the coming of Someone. The earth is filled with signs, and "everything and everybody in the whole wide world is looking, but the signs are different for everybody . . . Each knows and follows his own particular sign." They learn the truth that not by strife of words and argument but by love and wonder is the truth to be apprehended. "We're thinking and arguing too much," says the Tramp, "we lose the trail that way, we lose the rhythm. Just love and look and wonder . . . but keep on looking all the time." Such seeking is perhaps the whole

of earthly life, certainly the quest is not one which this world can satisfy. But it leads to a supreme discovery—the discovery that Francis Thompson made, that He who is being sought desires to be found, is Himself seeking those who look for Him. Birds, dragon-flies, beetles, ferns, flowers, . . . all are taken as "signs," all are marks of the presence of that for which all are in search. Uncle Felix, Aunt Emily, the Tramp, the Gardener, and each of the children see differently from one another, understand in different ways, rejoice in different signs, and yet the knowledge that all are seeking, and that all can find and each find in his own way, gives to them all a sense of unity, a feeling of brotherhood, a fellow feeling and sympathy towards others who cannot see as they do, cannot search in their ways, must seek and find, each along his own particular road.

The book is full of inspiration and suggestion, and also of a certain subtle sense of something being discovered, of something wonderful appearing unexpectedly on the scene. For those who have read no other of Algernon Blackwood's this may come as a startling transportation to another world—or of course it may leave them cold. It may be objected that the children are not ordinary children. As a matter of fact they are ourselves, our grown-up selves shown as children. For Blackwood is a child and sees others in their ever-young aspect. He sees our angels. Those, however, who know him well, know that he is still after something new, and that not even here has he said the word he wishes to say.

CHRISTMAS PAST AND FUTURE.

By A. CLUTTON BROCK.

LIVING in a suburb I suffer a great deal from carol singers. This sentence looks as if it might have been written by Scrooge; and yet there is some excuse for it. A carol is a work of art or it is nothing. Its whole value depends upon its quality and the manner in which it is sung. It makes no difference that it is a religious work of art. Art is a necessary part of religion, and if it is bad art, there is the less excuse for it because it is religious. Now those carol singers, mostly small boys, who come to my door four or five times an evening for a week or so before Christmas do not think of a carol as a work of art at all; they think of it as a means of getting coppers out of me. There are two carols which they usually sing, "Noel, Noel" and "While Shepherds Watched," and they gabble through those as if they were repeating something they had learnt by heart to a lazy teacher. They take no pleasure in singing them, nor have they any desire to sing them well. Naturally, therefore, I take no pleasure in hearing them.

Ought I to take a pleasure in hearing them because they are carols and because it is Christmas-time? On the contrary, the fact that they are the last corruption of a beautiful rite makes them all the more unpleasant. They provoke me to think of what might be, of what has been, and to compare it with what is. There is a source of delight gone from me and from them, and instead of it there is this meaningless gabble, all the uglier because it is sung and not said. It is an example, the most signal I know, of the manner in which our lives have been emptied of art.

Everyone, I think, must feel the want of art this Christmas, even if they cannot name the want. Before the war we were content with a kind of merriment at Christmas, with shops full of bright things—they might be mostly trash and litter, but they looked bright—with plenty of rich food and sweetmeats and dessert, and with a genuine feeling of kindness and generosity. Those things were all well enough so far as they went. But there was a vast deal of litter and trash which everybody gave to everybody and which nobody wanted, and as soon as Christmas was over we all said that it was merely litter and trash, the result of our commercial system, which makes things to sell and not to use. This year, however, it is all a mockery to us. We want a different kind of Christmas, one of beauty and solemnity, not of mere merriment, and we cannot in a moment make it for ourselves. There are people who will say that we do not want to pull long faces because of the war, least of all at Christmas-time, and there I agree with them. But this Christmas, more than ever before, we need to feel what Christmas means and to express what it means; and that cannot be done with litter and trash and gabbled carols and a pretence of merriment when no one is merry. Christmas remains Christmas, although the country is full of mourners and Christendom is rent in twain; but it cannot be the brainless and rather commercial Christmas we are used to.

What we need, and what we now feel the need of, is the power of expression which our forefathers possessed and which we have long lost—that power of expression which is called art. Art may be merry or sad, but it is always

serious, even at its merriest, and because it is serious it is beautiful. Further, it cannot be had without taking pains. The carol singing of which I complain is ugly because it is not serious and because no pains are taken with it. No one takes pains to train the singers, and they, therefore, take no pains to sing. In fact, in the matter of art, we are utterly lazy, as lazy as a Polynesian in matters of business. We think that we can always buy art if we want it, and so we think we can buy our Christmas. But Christmas cannot be bought; if it is to be worth having, it must be made, and our forefathers of the Middle Ages used to make it.

If we have some taste in music, we go to a concert and listen to Christmas music performed by professional artists. We buy that music as we buy turkeys or champagne, but our forefathers used to make their music for themselves. The forefathers of those children who gabble carols used to sing carols and knew what they meant, both words and music, and expressed their own feelings through them. If anywhere there are a few remaining mummers now, people listen to them with amused patronage. It is the survival of a quaint old custom; and the mummers themselves hardly know the meaning of the words they use. But everyone knew what was meant in the miracle plays of the Middle Ages and we may be sure that pains were taken with them, and that they were listened to seriously. Mr. E. K. Chambers, in his "Early English Lyrics," notices how carols are influenced by miracle plays, how the carol writer often describes what he has seen in the play, as if he had seen it in real life. And he wrote for people who had seen the play too, who had perhaps acted in it, and who shared his sense of the reality of what they sung.

We say commonly that those people of the Middle Ages were more religious than we are; but that is very doubtful. What is certain is that they had art in their religion, because they were not lazy about art. They knew that art was one of those things in life that was worth doing for their own sake; and we do not know that. We have lost our power of expressing ourselves, because we will not take the trouble to do it; and so we have lost the power of making Christmas for ourselves. And now the bought Christmas fails us and seems a mockery, because at last we know what Christmas means and wish to express its meaning and to hearten ourselves against sorrow and the loss of faith with it.

Our forefathers could do that through many Christmases that must have been as sad to them, with war or pestilence or famine, as this Christmas is to us. There is a kind of wistfulness in some of their Christmas songs, as if that peace on earth which they sang was very far from them. One may hear it in the most beautiful song of dialogue between the Virgin and her Child which ends with this verse:

Now sweet son, since it is so,
That all thing is at thy will,
I pray thee grant me a boon,
If it be both right and skill,
That child or man that will or can
Be merry upon my day,
To bliss them bring, and I shall sing
Lullay, By by, lullay.

And in others there is mystery, unearthliness, the sense of Christmas as a wonderful piece of news coming fresh every year from an infinite distance to the earth, like the sound of bells at night. That is expressed most of all in the song—

He came all so still,
Where his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

It is that mystery, that unearthliness, which we need to recover in our Christmas now, so that it may be to us a festival of eternal things which no trouble of our own can destroy for us. That it can only be if we make it for ourselves. Inspiration comes to those whose minds are fit for it, and the news of Christmas will come to us every year, even such a year as this, through our own darkness and storm, if we make ourselves ready to receive it.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRDS ON THE DEVON COAST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I would be much obliged if you could help me with the identity of two birds which I have seen, as my books on natural history do not actually give me the information I should like. Last spring, on the coast of North Devon, a very rugged part where a number of gulls breed, I saw a bird perched on the edge of the cliff which I am certain was a peregrine falcon, that is as far as I could tell from the actual description; but what has puzzled me is its cry of alarm, which it raised when taking wing on seeing me. The cry appeared to me to be distinctly like y-y-y quickly uttered, but not very loud for the size of the bird. Its flight was very rapid with quickly beating wings. Except for hearing this cry, which does not seem to agree with books, I should have never doubted it was a peregrine falcon. Last week in Burnham Beeches, among a flock of chaffinches, I saw what appeared to be a brambling or brambling finch; the general appearance was much the same, except that the bird had a distinct band of yellow or orange encircling the breast and shoulders. The rest of the bird appeared to agree with that of a brambling finch, except for this collar or band of yellow round its shoulders and breast, which I do not see mentioned in books. I would be very much obliged if you could help me with the identity of these two birds, as I would very much like to know if I am correct.—R. F. S.

[We should say without doubt that the hawk was a kestrel, probably a female, being appreciably larger than the male, duller in plumage and more barred. They are very common on the Devonshire cliffs. The cry given is that of the kestrels, "kee-kee kee." The second bird probably was a girl bunting, though it is difficult to identify from the description. The brambling in winter has the shoulders and breast a warm orange brown, but it would appear probably to one who got a casual glimpse as a buff colour. The girl bunting has a distinct yellow collar beneath the black throat, a pale sulphur yellow. The brambling is possible, though improbable. The girl bunting is a much more likely bird to encounter in Burnham Beeches.—Ed.]

FOUR TALL AND PROPER MEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any county beat this record for the war? Four brothers holding commissions in His Majesty's Regular Forces and each standing well over 6ft. in height: Second-Lieutenant J. D. H. Farmer, R.F.A., age twenty-one; killed in action at Eksternest, November 4th, 1914; Second-Lieutenant F. S. H. Farmer, 3rd Norfolks, age twenty-two; Sub-Lieutenant L. G. H. Farmer, R.N., H.M.S. Colossus, First Battle Squadron, age twenty; and Second-Lieutenant C. R. H. Farmer, 18th Hussars, attached to Motor Machine Gun Service, age seventeen years and ten months.—J. H. FARMER (pater).

DISHING HORSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read Mr. Hope Brook's interesting letter on the above subject. I gather from it that he at any rate agrees with me that it is inherited from the thoroughbred; but that does not clear up my question. Why do they do it? From the fact that this defect, or deformity, is not found in ponies, or I expect in any half wild horses or in other domestic animals, I argue that it is a result of human interference, and I can think of nothing more likely to cause it, than the training and racing of two year olds. I have often wondered whether far more harm than good is not done to thoroughbred stock by this practice. It is done on the score of economy, I suppose. It is not often that the most economical methods are the best in stock raising, except from an *£ s. d.* point of view. Are thoroughbred horses the exception, I wonder?—A. M. PILLINER.

RATS IN HOUSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to the letter of "J. A." in your issue of the 4th inst., may I say that at the end of last August I put down five shillingworth of Liverpool virus in some old buildings used for wood storage and fowl houses, and again, with an interval of about ten days, another five shillingworth was put down. The rats are back again now as much as ever. It seems rather a costly method if *£3* or *£4* a year has to be spent on Liverpool virus, and the other suggestions I have seen as to barrels, etc., are not practicable here. I am still looking for a remedy. The rats were cleared out of the dwelling-house by means of concrete and cutting away ivy, but it would be an expensive thing to concrete old buildings.—H. M.

TRAVELLING IN PRE-WAR DAYS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you kindly inform me the amount of time it used to take (in pre-war days) by the fastest service from (1) London to Paris, and (2) Paris to Nice, and on such service does one pass through Marseilles when travelling between Paris and Nice?—E. C.

[The fastest service from London to Paris was $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The journey from Paris to Nice took 15 hours via Marseilles.—Ed.]

VENISON AS FOOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to Mr. Macpherson's letter in COUNTRY LIFE, December 4th, if it were possible "to grow" venison as readily and cheaply as pork, mutton or beef, folks in general would be long before they could "stomach or relish" the meat as food. Venison comes into the country markets now and then, only to have people "turn up their noses at it." They do not like its smell or colour, raw or cooked, and say "give us red beef," and speak of venison as "ramel." The countryman's taste has either improved or deteriorated since the days when Robin Hood ranged the Forest and killed the King's deer, so that the King could dine with the Miller of Mansfield and sing the praise of his own venison.—THOMAS RATCLIFFE.

SPHAGNUM FOR THE HOSPITALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of December 11th you had an extremely interesting article on sphagnum collecting. As the writer remarked, it is a harvest



WRINGING OUT THE SPHAGNUM.

which can be reaped in winter as well as in summer, but, of course, it takes a good deal of drying. The picture I enclose depicts a preliminary wring in a coarse cloth before spreading the moss to dry. By this means, what is otherwise a lengthy process, owing to the absorbent nature of the sphagnum, is considerably shortened.—M. A.

A GLOUCESTERSHIRE LIME-KILN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The allusion to lime and lime burning in "Round the Farm in Winter" reminds me of a temporary revival of this rural industry which I was witness of some few years since. When I went to live in that corner of Gloucestershire which is bounded on the west by the Wye, I was at once aware that I had come to "limestone land." Lime-kilns were everywhere, upon the roadsides and in pasture fields, where the deep arched recesses into which the burnt lime is drawn from the furnace above often gave welcome shelter from a sudden storm. In the woods, too, they were abundant, and there served at times as traps to heedless rabbit-poaching dogs. But they were all disused, until one day I was rejoiced to find one with a trail of blue smoke drifting from its furnace-top. Getting into conversation with the man in charge, I found that he was a lime burner by trade, but had for many years been working in the coal pits of South Wales owing to the slump in his own profession. Now, however, he had returned to the neighbourhood and had obtained employment with the owner of the kiln—a farmer who, finding his turnips much affected with "finger and toe," had decided on the experiment of abandoning "artificial" for a season and of seeing whether a return to the lime of his fathers might perhaps remedy the ill. The burning was making slow progress, owing, according to the lime burner, to the surface stone of the quarry from which he was drawing his supplies being damp and "weathered." When he got down to the dry limestone beneath he expected to be able to turn out sixty barrow-loads a day from his pair of kilns. Although I spent some of the happiest months of my early life as a farm pupil, I failed to absorb sufficient knowledge to judge whether or not the farmers' experiment was likely to prove successful or not.—ARTHUR O. COOKE.

THE TOMB OF A WAR HORSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Outside the City of Agra, the Grand Trunk Road running north to Delhi is lined for many miles with tombs. The Mughals, owing to their Turki ancestry, were great tomb builders, and the ruins of their vast memorial gardens surround all the old capitals of Hindustan. But even in decay there is nothing here to suggest sadness, nothing of that air, at once businesslike and forlorn, which haunts the tightly-packed rows of ghostly slabs and crosses in cemeteries at home; not death, but fair immortal life in Paradise is the motive of the Mughal tombs. The owner's favourite garden house or summer palace provided his last resting place, when the surrounding fruit and flower garden was invariably made over to some religious foundation for the use of pilgrims and passing travellers. From Agra to the immense garden tomb of the Emperor Akbar at Sikandrah the whole way is an Indian *Via Appia*. Great brown ruined domes and high crumbling gateways show between the hedgerow trees. Further from the city the splendid façades of the Suraj Bagh and Kanch Mahall are almost intact, and among these elaborate structures it is with some amusement and surprise that one comes on the quaint little tomb to a horse. The statue is life size and carved out of a solid block of the local dark red sandstone. The story goes that, while carrying an urgent message from Delhi to the Emperor at Agra, the favourite charger of one of the Mughal courtiers dropped dead at this spot, just four miles short of its journey's end. At the cost of its own life the horse saved the Emperor's, whereupon he rewarded the loyal steed by building this tomb and that of its syce near by. Who the owner of the famous horse was tradition does not tell. But the curious way in which the figure of the animal is cut short suggests some reference to the ancient customs of Rajput chivalry, one of which was the painting of their chargers' legs red to symbolise the

blood of their enemies through which they waded to victory. If the battered war horse by the Grand Trunk Road seems more comic than imposing, Moslem religious strictures have more to answer for, perhaps, than the sculptor's natural want of skill. In Northern India the talent for the sympathetic representation of animals, so conspicuous on the old Buddhist shrines, had been for centuries strictly suppressed, and Hindu temples and palaces had been destroyed.



AN EMPEROR'S TRIBUTE TO A HORSE.

Under Pathan and Mughal masters the forms of plants and flowers supplied the only outlet for the Indian craftsman's inborn sense of movement and flowing rhythmic line. But removed from this repressive influence, the great war horse of Kanarak in Orissa shows to what epic grandeur Indian animal sculpture can attain.—C. M. VILLIERS-STUART.

PROFITABLE UNDERWOOD.—THE ALDER BUCKTHORN FOR CHARCOAL MAKING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Thirty or forty years ago alder buckthorn was largely used in the manufacture of gunpowder, but recently it has been replaced by other products, and since the price on the Continent has fallen to nothing, where it exists it is burnt in the house fire with ordinary wood, no special notice being taken of it. Alder buckthorn does not require a good soil, and in forest cultivation it is considered, as a rule, that it appears in ruined coppice woods. Its appearance is a sign of exhaustion of the soil, and it is considered a nuisance in the woods as producing practically nothing. It is never planted, and therefore the nurseries do not generally produce it. Growing anywhere in the North of Scotland as well as in the South of England, there is no reason why the home-grown should produce charcoal much superior to that from imported buckthorn. In every case the rules at the end of your article of December 4th are not complete, and as they stand would not give satisfactory financial results. (1) It gives, so far as it can, good results in low, sandy, humiferous soils. The single plants must be cut the second year after planting in order to form bushes. The first cutting, if taken after six

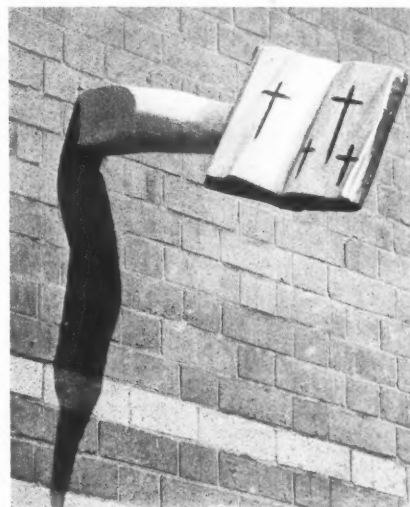
years' growth, should take place eight years after planting, and will not then give large returns, because the bush is still too small. The first good return would take place after fourteen years. Considering the various expenses, the returns will not be very large.—V.

A CURIOUS INN SIGN.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a remarkable inn sign which may be seen at Mablethorpe in Lincolnshire. It is known as The Book in Hand, but its origin is lost in obscurity. Nothing definite appears to be known as to its meaning, the only theory that I have heard advanced being that the book is the Bible and the three crosses on the right representative of those erected

at Calvary. It would be interesting to know whether any of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE can offer any solution of the problem.—HENRY WALKER.



"THE BOOK IN HAND."

THE GANDER AND THE HEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—To those who have made a close study of animal life it must ever remain an open question how far birds and beasts share the affections and are moved by the same motives as human beings. The care of their young and the maternal instinct we all acknowledge as a familiar attribute, but the general benevolence which we are accustomed to regard as the peculiar distinction of the human race, and which is not always to be found in them, we do not expect to meet with in the lower creation. Instances of it do, however, occur. Among others, I can recall the story of a hen whose troubles were by no means uncommon, her young brood of ducklings having, as usual, taken to the water, to the great distress of their maternal guardian. In this instance a stately old gander came to the rescue, moved by the cries of the hen. There were plenty of ducks and some geese about, but he alone seemed to take in the situation at a glance, and sailing quietly up to the ducklings he kept them together as if they belonged to him; but as he came near the hen flew right on his back and stood there clucking as if she had been on the ground and calling them round her. When the ducklings had been in the water some little time, the gander brought them to the shore, when they waddled up the bank and the old hen flew after them and clucked round them as much as to say, "What queer chicks you are to go into the water like that and give me such a fright." Every day after that it became a custom with the gander to swim about in charge of the ducklings with the hen on his back, until they were old enough to take care of themselves.—A. B.

A PRIMITIVE DOORMAT.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The British countryman who lives near the moors is not so careful of his wife's clean hearth as his Dutch brother, and instead of leaving his boots at the door, he rubs off as much mud as he can on the whins at his doorstep, which mat is held in its place by heavy stones. These mats cost nothing, and can be replaced from the whins on the common in a few minutes.—F. M. S.



THE ADAPTABLE WHIN BUSH.

REPORT ON CATTLE GRAZING EXPERIMENT CONDUCTED AT FAIRHURST HALL, PARBOLD, NEAR WIGAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you the report of an experiment made on pasture land with sulphate of ammonia. This experiment was laid down to ascertain whether any higher feeding value existed in plants grown as a result of having received a top-dressing of sulphate of ammonia. A field was chosen with an area of 3.297 acres, and this was divided into two equal parts each having an area of 1.648 acres. The field is situated on the millstone grit and the soil is of a slackly clay nature, but is well drained. One end and part of one side are sheltered by trees, but in the main it is open with a due westerly aspect, and an altitude of 99ft. above sea level. There was a plentiful supply of water for the cattle to drink—a pipe laid on from the Council's main, and by means of an automatic tap two troughs, one in each enclosure, were kept full. The higher portion of the field received 178lb. of sulphate of ammonia, equal to a dressing of 1cwt. to the statute acre, the lower portion receiving no manure whatever. The whole of the field was pastured by ewes and lambs for eighteen days ending May 3rd, and on May 5th the sulphate of ammonia was applied. There were six two year old heifers selected from Mr. Ainscough's herd and three were turned out on each plot. Care was taken to obtain six beasts as nearly alike as possible, and valued on the 29th of May, according to Mr. Ainscough's books, at £95. On the latter date the cattle were turned out, and the aggregate weight of the beasts on the manured area was 25cwt. 1qr. and on the unmanured area 22cwt. 2qr. They were then periodically weighed until September 13th and the results may be tabulated thus:

Date.	Beasts on manured area.			Beasts on unmanured area.		
	wt.	qr.	lb.	wt.	qr.	lb.
May 29th	25	1	0	22	2	0
June 10th	26	1	14	23	3	21
" 24th	27	2	5	24	2	8
July 1st	28	3	6	25	3	2
August 9th	30	1	0	27	0	9
" 17th	31	2	0	27	0	16
" 31st	32	1	7	27	3	0
Sept. 13th	33	2	0	28	1	15

Between September 13th and September 17th the six beasts were sold, those from the manured portion selling at £26 10s., £18 and £19 10s., respectively, making a total of £64; those from the unmanured portion were sold at £16 10s., £18 and £18 10s., respectively, making a total of £53. The gain in weight on the manured portion, as shown above, was 8cwt. 1qr., and on the unmanured portion, 5cwt. 3qr. This shows an increase in weight from the manured portion against the unmanured portion of 2cwt. 1qr. 13lb., and valued in the terms of beef at the market price as quoted in the official return of the Board of Agriculture (xii—37) at Preston, September 15th, 1915, at 12s. 6d. per stone, is £11 11s. 10½d. The cost of the sulphate of ammonia applied to the manured area was £1 1s. 3½d., application, cartage, etc., 2s. 1d., making a total cost of £1 3s. 4½d., which has brought in a revenue of £11 11s. 10½d., leaving a net profit of £10 8s. 6d. The beasts would have remained on the field rather longer but for the fact of a very cold night, and as they would have had to have been brought in and receive some extra provender, it was thought advisable to complete the experiment and sell them off. The difference in actual valuation, which shows an increase in value of £16 10s. on the beasts on the manured area, and of £5 10s. on the beasts on the unmanured area, showing a profit in actual money of £11, proves fairly conclusively that the experiment and valuations are very fair and I think one checks the other. A further experiment will be carried out next year.—ARTHUR OWEN BLACKHURST, N.D.A., F.C.S.

[This is an interesting report on a carefully conducted experiment which gave excellent results, but it must not be thought that similar results would follow every application of the manure. On the contrary, there might be a neighbouring field in which no result could be obtained at all. The explanation is that there could have been no lack of potash or phosphates in the soil, at least not a great lack, and the law of the minimum has been satisfied by the supply of nitrogen under form of sulphate of

ammonia. The moral is that an analysis of the soil should be made before artificial manure is applied either in experiment or in agricultural practice.—ED.]

BIG-GAME HUNTING IN RUSSIA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photographs illustrate two favourite forms of Russian sport—elk and bear shooting. The former animal is widely distributed throughout the Russian Empire, though the heads never attain the magnificent proportions of the antlers secured in the Kenai Peninsula and Alaska. The usual methods of hunting are by driving, or stalking during the rutting seasons. Driving, at the best of times, is but a poor form of sport, and entails little skill or exertion on the part of the hunter. Care must be exercised by those



A RUSSIAN HUNTING PARTY—BEAR.



A RUSSIAN HUNTING PARTY—ELK.

in charge of the operations that the animals are gently "moved," in distinction to being "driven," in the required direction, and local knowledge is necessary to locate the usual passes frequented by the game. The open season lasts for four months. The lack of experienced hunters who can "call" during the rutting season renders this form of sport less universal than the simpler method of driving. In the Ural Mountains and Siberia elk are usually tracked on snow-shoes, driving being out of the question. Bears are even more widely distributed than elk. The usual procedure adopted by the casual sportsman is to buy his bear from the local hunters at so much per "pound" (32lb.). The prices vary, but have increased considerably of late years, as they have been shot off to a great extent in the neighbourhood of the more important centres. A good deal of cheating is possible on the part of the hunters if they happen to encounter an unsophisticated foreigner.—FRANK WALLACE.